SPECIAL

TIME

EDITION

BEST OF *Person of the* Year

LEADERS WHO MADE A BETTER WORLD

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TIME

Leaders Who Made a Better World

A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON TIME PERSON OF THE Year: Ever since Charles Lindbergh was proclaimed the Man of the Year for 1927 in the January 2, 1928, issue, TIME magazine has annually designated one man, woman, couple, or concept that had the most influence on the world during the previous 12 months.

The editors apparently didn't think that naming Lindbergh Man of the Year would be particularly noteworthy—in fact, the actual article about him is fairly brief and not even easy to find within the magazine.

But, according to a letter to readers that appeared in 1944's edition (Man of the Year: Dwight Eisenhower), it all started by accident.

Here's what happened: New Year's week of 1928 had been a string of slow news days. As the magazine's publication date approached, the editors were at a loss over whom to put on the cover. "No one had done anything newsworthy enough to put his picture on TIME's cover, so somebody suggested we stop looking for a Man of the Week and pick a Man of the Year," wrote then publisher P.I. Prentice in the January 1, 1945, issue. "This was an easy choice: Charles Augustus Lindbergh, who had soloed the Atlantic in only 33 hours and 39 minutes, was the hero of 1927." (And, as then Deputy Managing Editor Radhika Jones pointed out in 2014, Lindbergh had not been on the cover yet, an oversight that needed rectifying.)

Since then, the title goes to "the person or persons who most affected the news and our lives, for good or ill, and embodied what was important about the year, for better or for worse," as then Managing Editor Walter Isaacson wrote in the 1998 issue. That means the person is not necessarily a hero—Adolf Hitler, for example, was Person of the Year in 1938; Josef Stalin got the nod twice, and Iran's Ayatullah Khomeini was named in 1979. Some choices have been ambiguous; but others were named for doing great things.

In this issue, we are highlighting the past Persons of the Year who made a positive impact on the world. Unplug, dive in, and find hope and inspiration in these stories of people who used their influence for good.

On the next few pages, you'll find the profile of the most recent TIME Person of the Year, Taylor Swift, then take a trip down memory lane through stories of other change-makers, going back to the franchise's origin. In the second half of the book, we highlight groups of people TIME recognized for their selfless contributions to society.

Despite turmoil in this world, there are luminaries who work to make it a better place.

Enjoy.

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2023 *CULTURAL PHENOMENON*

Taylor Swift

TAYLOR SWIFT IS TELLING ME A STORY, AND WHEN Taylor Swift tells you a story, you listen, because you know it's going to be good—not only because she's had an extraordinary life, but because she's an extraordinary storyteller. This one is about a time she got her heart broken, although not in the way you might expect.

She was 17, she says, and she had booked the biggest opportunity of her life so far—a highly coveted slot opening for country superstar Kenny Chesney on tour. "This was going to change my career," she remembers. "I was so excited." But a couple weeks later, Swift arrived home to find her mother Andrea sitting on the front steps of their house. "She was weeping," Swift says. "Her head was in her hands as if there had been a family emergency." Through sobs, Andrea told her daughter that Chesney's tour had been sponsored by a beer company. Taylor was too young to join. "I was devastated," Swift says.

But some months later, at Swift's 18th birthday party, she saw Chesney's promoter. He handed her a card from Chesney that read, as Swift recalls, "I'm sorry that you couldn't come on the tour, so I wanted to make it up to you." With the note was a check. "It was for more money than I'd ever seen in my life," Swift says. "I was able to pay my band bonuses. I was able to pay for my tour buses. I was able to fuel my dreams."

Listening to Swift share this, on a clear fall afternoon in her New York City apartment, I'm struck by how satisfying the story is. There are high stakes at the outset; there are details, vivid and sensory; there's a twist that flips the action on its head; and there's a happy ending for its hero. It takes her only about 30 seconds to recount this, but those 30 seconds contain an entire narrative world.

I'm not surprised. Swift has a preternatural skill for finding the story. Her anecdote about Chesney symbolizes a larger narrative in Swift's life, one about redemption—where our protagonist discovers new happiness not despite challenges, but because of them. Swift took a few hits to get here. "I've been raised up and down the flagpole of public opinion so many times in the last 20 years," she says as we tuck into a cozy den off the kitchen to talk, and she kicks off her shoes and curls up onto the sofa. "I've been given a tiara, then had it taken away." She is seemingly unguarded in conversation, reflective about both where she's been and where she finds herself now. After all, while she's long been one of the biggest entertainers in the world, 2023 was different. "It feels like the breakthrough moment of my career, happening at 33," she says. "And for the first time in my life, I was mentally tough enough to take what comes with that." This is her story—even if she's now so high that it's hard to believe she was ever low.

Taylor Swift's accomplishments as an artist—culturally, critically, and commercially—are so legion that to recount them seems almost beside the point. As a pop star, she sits in rarefied company, alongside Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, and Madonna; as a songwriter, she has been compared to Bob Dylan, Paul McCartney, and Joni Mitchell. As a businesswoman, she has built an empire worth, by some estimates, over $1 billion. And as a celebrity—who by dint of being a woman is scrutinized for everything from whom she dates to what she wears—she has long commanded constant attention and knows how to use it. ("I don't give Taylor advice about being famous," Stevie Nicks tells me. "She doesn't need it.") But in 2023, something shifted. To discuss her movements felt like discussing politics or the weather—a language spoken so widely it needed no context. She became the main character of the world.

If you're skeptical, consider it: How many conversations did you have about Taylor Swift last year? How many times did you see a photo of her while scrolling on your phone? Were you one of the people who made a pilgrimage to a city where she played? Did you buy a ticket to her concert film? Did you double-tap an Instagram post, or laugh at a tweet, or click on a headline about her? Did you find yourself humming "Cruel Summer" while waiting in line at the grocery store? Did a friend confess that they watched clips of the Eras Tour night after night on TikTok? Or did you?

HO'S
TAYLOR
SWIFT
ANYWAY
EW.

Her epic career-retrospective tour recounting her artistic "eras," which is set to conclude in December 2024, is so far the biggest of all time and the first to gross over a billion dollars; analysts talked about the "Taylor effect," as politicians from Thailand, Hungary, and Chile implored her to play their countries. Cities, stadiums, and streets were renamed for her. Every time she came to a new city, a mini economic boom took place as hotels and restaurants saw a surge of visitors. In releasing her concert movie, Swift bypassed studios and streamers, instead forging an unusual pact with AMC, giving the theater chain its highest single-day ticket sales in history. There are at least 10 college classes devoted to her, including one at Harvard; the professor, Stephanie Burt, told TIME she plans to compare Swift's work to that of the poet William Wordsworth. Friendship bracelets traded by her fans at concerts became a hot accessory, with one line in a song causing as much as a 500% increase in sales at craft stores. When Swift started dating Travis Kelce, the Kansas City Chief and three-time Super Bowl champion, his games saw a massive increase in viewership. (Yes, she somehow made one of America's most popular things—football—even more popular.) And then there's her critically hailed songbook—a catalog so beloved that as she rereleases it, she's often breaking chart records she herself set. She's the last monoculture left in our stratified world.

It's hard to see history when you're in the middle of it, harder still to distinguish Swift's impact on the culture from her celebrity, which emits so much light it can be blinding. But something unusual is happening with Swift, without a contemporary precedent. She deploys the most efficient medium of the day—the pop song—to tell her story. Yet over time, she has harnessed the power of the media, both traditional and new, to create something wholly unique—a narrative world, in which her music is just one piece in an interactive, shape-shifting story. Swift is that story's architect and hero, protagonist and narrator.

In 2023, she perfected her craft—not just with her music, but in her position as the master storyteller of the modern era. The world, in turn, watched, clicked, cried, danced, sang along, swooned, caravanned to stadiums and movie theaters, let her work soundtrack their lives. For Swift, it's a peak. "This is the proudest and happiest I've ever felt, and the most creatively fulfilled and free I've ever been," Swift tells me. "Ultimately, we can convolute it all we want, or try to overcomplicate it, but there's only one question." Here, she adopts a booming voice. "Are you not entertained?" *—Excerpted from TIME's 2023 Person of the Year cover story by Sam Lansky*

Page 3: *Swift performs in Kansas City, Missouri, on the Eras Tour in July 2023.* ***Top Left:*** *Swift on the Eras Tour in Glendale, Arizona, in March 2023.* ***Bottom Left:*** *The Eras Tour, November 2023, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.* ***Left:*** *Onstage on the Eras Tour in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in November 2023.*

MEANWHILE IN 2023…

Februrary The Kansas City Chiefs defeated the Philadelphia Eagles, 38-35, in Super Bowl LVII. **July** *Barbie*, the highest-grossing film of 2023, debuted in theaters in the U.S. and U.K. **November** Henry Kissinger, one of the most influential U.S. diplomats in history, died at age 100.

2019 *CLIMATE CRUSADER*

Greta Thunberg

IN 2019, GRETA THUNBERG, AN ORDINARY 16-year-old from Sweden, got the world's attention. Her focus: getting leaders across the globe to take the climate threat seriously and take action.

What became a global movement started with breaking the rules. Beginning in August 2018, Thunberg skipped school and spent her days in front of the Swedish Parliament building, holding a sign that read *skolstrejk för klimatet*: "school strike for climate." Then, she addressed the U.N., met with Pope Francis, scrapped with President Donald Trump, and called on young people across the world to "climate strike" on September 20, 2019. TIME reported that 4 million did—it was the largest climate demonstration in history.

In 2019, *Collins English Dictionary* made Thunberg's phrase "climate strike" its word of the year.

Thunberg is slight (barely 5 feet tall) and has a quiet way. Her social interactions are different than most kids'. She is direct, not distractible, and not impressed with celebrity or status, all of which helped make her a phenomenon. Thunberg simply sticks to the point: Oceans will rise. Cities will flood. People will suffer.

"I want you to panic," she told the annual convention of CEOs and world leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2019. "I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act."

Thunberg kept on fighting even through the global pandemic in 2020. In an interview with TIME that year, she warned against complacency, "We can't go back to sleep and think things are solved now. On the contrary, that should make us even more committed to continuing pushing even harder. Changes will only happen if we keep pushing—if we keep being very, very annoying, and repeat these things over and over again."

In 2021, she helped found the Climate Live concert series along with artists and activists from around the world with the goal of empowering, educating, and engaging youth in environmental causes. The group is active in over 40 countries.

Thunberg and Ugandan activist Vanessa Nakate penned an open letter to the global media in 2021, saying, "We are social animals and if our leaders, and our media, don't act as if we were in a crisis then of course we won't understand that we are. One of the essential elements of a functioning democracy is a free press that objectively informs the citizens of the great challenges our society faces. And the media must hold the people in power accountable for their actions, or inactions. You are among our last hopes. No one else has the possibility and the opportunity to reach as many people in the extremely short timeframe we have. We cannot do this without you. The climate crisis is only going to become more urgent. We can still avoid the worst consequences, we can still turn this around. But not if we continue like today. You have the resources and possibilities to change the story overnight."

In July and September 2023, a Swedish court fined Thunberg for disobeying police during demonstrations. In October 2023, she was arrested, along with more than two dozen others, for refusing to leave a protest that blocked the entrance to a major oil and gas industry conference in London. The case was later dismissed. In April 2024, Dutch police in The Hague took her into custody for blocking a highway during a protest.

Thunberg was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2021, 2022, and 2023, and has received numerous other awards, including the United Nation's inaugural Human Act Award on Earth Day in 2020. She used the proceeds to launch a campaign that raised over $1.3 million to help vulnerable children who were affected by the pandemic. At least five new animal species have been named after her, including a beetle, snails, a spider, and a frog.

Right: *Thunberg speaking in New York after a 14-day carbon-neutral journey across the Atlantic Ocean in 2019.*

MEANWHILE IN 2019...

April A fire breaks out at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, destroying the spire and most of the roof. **August** Celebrated American author Toni Morrison dies at age 88. **December** Donald Trump becomes the third U.S. president to be impeached.

2015 *CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY*

Angela Merkel

TIME'S 2015 PERSON OF THE YEAR COVER STORY notes that "Leaders are tested only when people don't want to follow." The year 2015 was a test for Germany's chancellor Angela Merkel, who spent the first 25 years of her life living in East Germany. In the face of opposition, she offered tough love and mercy to those in need while enduring harsh criticism for doing it.

First, Greece's debts were threatening the euro. Merkel pulled from her experience watching East Germany's economy crumble when the Berlin Wall fell. She offered a bailout to Greece in exchange for strict austerity measures. The Greeks resisted, but they were eventually forced to accept her terms or get expelled from the European Union.

They called her "Little Angela Merkel." She was likened to a dominatrix and a storm trooper.

Then came the refugee problem. Postwar Germany had a history of embracing new arrivals, and in 2015, the people in need of welcome were 1.1 million Syrians. But a terrorist bombing attack in Paris weeks after Germany took the refugees in made critics want to slam the doors.

Then President Donald Trump called her insane. German protesters called her a traitor.

When asked what she intended to do to prevent "Islamization" after so many Syrians entered Germany, she said, "Cultures and societies that are shaped by fear will without doubt not get a grip on the future."

A series of terrorist attacks in the E.U. spurred more immigration controversy. In July 2016, a 17-year-old refugee from Afghanistan stabbed and injured five people on and near a train in Wurzburg, Germany. In December 2016, 12 people were killed when an ISIS-affiliated truck hijacker drove into a Christmas market in Berlin. Merkel's approval ratings took a hit, but she was reelected in 2017, although her coalition did not receive overall majority. In 2018, Merkel was forced to negotiate tightening the borders.

In a large part due to political splintering in Germany, Merkel announced in 2018 that she was not going to seek reelection as chancellor in 2021.

In response to the 2020 pandemic, Merkel was willing to take on more so others could take on less. She came up with a bold economic recovery plan and convinced her constituents of the need for common European debt. Her science background served her well for directing pandemic policy—she stressed science and was successful in encouraging citizens to comply with lockdowns, mask guidance, and social distancing restrictions.

"Merkel has strengthened Europe itself by showing other leaders that compromise is possible for the good of all. That makes future crises less likely—a legacy worth celebrating," TIME foreign affairs columnist Ian Bremmer wrote in 2021.

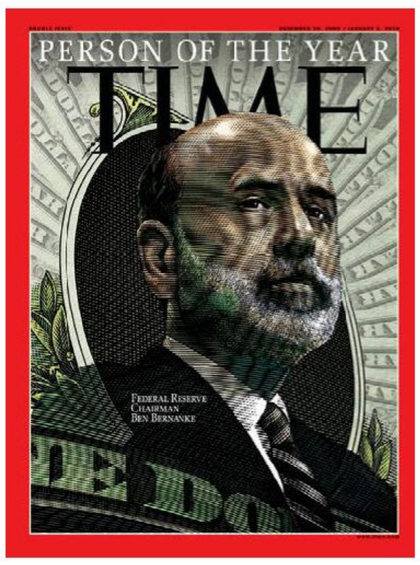
Since she left public office, Merkel, who has been criticized for her friendly relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin and for being too dependent on Russian gas during her tenure, has spoken out against Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In her first public speech after leaving office, she described it as "a barbaric war of aggression" and the most "glaring breach of international law" in Europe since the Second World War.

Merkel was named *Forbes*' Most Powerful Woman in the World 14 times.

Left: *Merkel speaks at a 2015 press conference in Berlin.*

MEANWHILE IN 2015...

February Actor Leonard Nimoy, who played Spock on the TV show *Star Trek*, dies. **February** Taylor Swift wins the Album of the Year Grammy for *1989*. **September** NASA reveals evidence that liquid water once existed on Mars.



2009 *CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S. FEDERAL RESERVE*

Ben Bernanke

IN 2009, THE ECONOMY WAS THE OVERRIDING news story, and it was a lousy one. Headlines sang of layoffs, bankruptcies, foreclosures, "new frugality," and "new normal." They scoffed at the bailouts and bonuses. But there were some hopeful spots too: The Dow was rebounding, signaling that the Great Recession may be ending, thanks to Ben Bernanke.

To say that the Federal Reserve is complicated is an understatement—Bernanke's actions were widely misunderstood and highly criticized. But he was the right man in the right role at just the right time. Before President George W. Bush placed him on the U.S. Federal Reserve, Bernanke was a professor of economics at Princeton University and a scholar of the Great Depression. He was, perhaps, the most qualified person in America to keep the Federal Reserve from making the same mistakes that caused the economic implosion in 1929.

Bernanke helped ensure that 2009 was a period of weak recovery rather than catastrophic depression. He wielded unrivaled power over America's money, jobs, savings, and national future, and he took that power to heart. The careful, educated decisions he made during the Great Recession shaped the U.S. path to prosperity, the direction of politics, and the country's relationship with the rest of the world.

Bernanke went on to a second term as chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, serving until 2014 when he was replaced with the Fed's first female chair, Janet Yellen. In 2015, TIME reported that someone paid $70,500 to have lunch with Bernanke through the website Charitybuzz. Proceeds from the meeting went to the RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights.

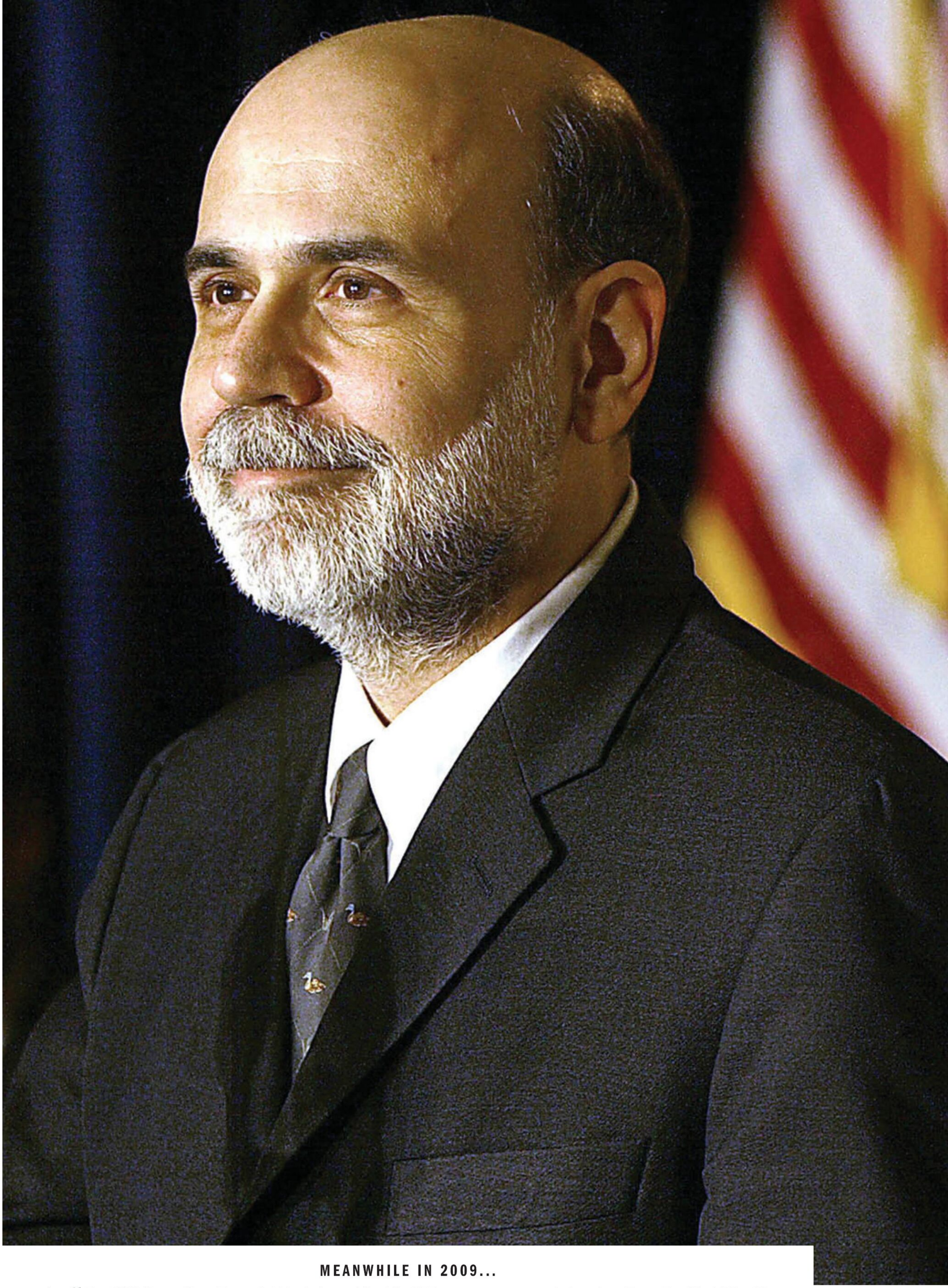
In 2015, he published the *New York Times* bestseller *Courage to Act: A Memoir of a Crisis and Its Aftermath*, about his time as chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve. He did an interview with TIME the same year, saying that he still believed in Wall Street and discussing how partisan gridlock in Washington made the Fed's position difficult during and after the 2008 financial crisis. He told interviewer Rana Foroohar, "There are many people who feel for whatever reason, that the low rate policy, whatever its benefits for the economy, may have some side effects they don't like. … And my response to that, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, is, well, if you think the Fed is doing too much, you shouldn't be complaining to the Fed, complain to the fiscal authorities because if they were doing more, the Fed could have done less, and these problems—whatever they may be—would have been less of an issue."

Bernanke also stated that more executives should have faced legal ramifications as a result of the 2007-'08 financial crisis, telling *USA Today* in 2015, "While you want to do everything you can to fix corporations that have bad cultures and encourage bad behavior—and the Fed was very much engaged in doing that—obviously illegal acts ultimately are done by individuals, not by legal fictions."

In 2020, Bernanke received the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award, and he was made a National Academy of Sciences member in 2021. The same year, he published *21st Century Monetary Policy: The Federal Reserve from the Great Inflation to COVID-19*. In it, he offers a fresh analysis of the office's successes and failures.

In 2022, he shared the Nobel Prize in economic sciences with two U.S.-based economists, Douglas W. Diamond and Philip H. Dybvig, "for research on banks and financial crises;" Bernanke's research on the Great Depression was noted in the press release. The revised version of his 2004 book, *Essays on the Great Depression*, was released in 2024.

Right: *Bernanke is applauded after he is sworn in as chairman of the Federal Reserve in 2006.*



MEANWHILE IN 2009...

April The G20 Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy convenes in London. **June** The World Health Organization declares H1N1, aka the swine flu, a global pandemic. **June** Michael Jackson dies of a propofol overdose at his home in Los Angeles at age 50.

2008 | 2012 *U.S. PRESIDENT-ELECT*

Barack Obama

IN NOVEMBER 2008, WHEN AMERICAN VOTERS chose Barack Obama to be the next president, the country's shattered confidence needed a bailout just as much as the failed banks and struggling automakers did. The stock market was plunging, credit was tight, and unemployment was at 6.8% and climbing. Obama's campaign theme was change—the kind of nuts-and-bolts change that could be seen and measured. The American people selected their first Black president, a relatively unknown Democratic senator from Illinois, because he seemed the most likely candidate to make that change happen.

After the election, veteran Democratic pollster Peter Hart put together a focus group to ask Virginia voters why they thought their state that gave George W. Bush an 8-point victory in 2004 chose Obama by 6 points in 2008. Their responses clustered around the connection between competence and confidence. They said they were drawn to Obama's self-assured and calming personality. They felt he was "honest," and a "straight shooter"—in other words, a person who does what he says he will do.

The morning after winning the election, Obama got right to work. He knew the mounting issues with the economy were going to get worse if he waited until his inauguration to take action, so he set up camp, rolled up his sleeves (literally), and started assembling a diverse team of experts to help him get the country back on track.

In the 2012 U.S. presidential election, incumbent Barack Obama defeated Republican Mitt Romney by 5 million votes, securing his second term. He was the first Democrat in more than 75 years to get the majority popular vote twice, largely because of a changing electorate. He got 71% of Latinos, 93% of Black voters, 73% of Asians, and 60% of people under 30—groups who, before 2008, did not flock to the polls. The country was changing, and it wanted a leader whose policies reflected "the new America."

Shortly after the election, President Obama told TIME, "I think 2012 was an indication that, no, this is not an anomaly. We've gone through a very difficult time. The American people have rightly been frustrated at the pace of change, and the economy is still struggling, and this president we elected is imperfect. And yet despite all that, this is who we want to be. That's a good thing."

In the 2012 Person of the Year cover story, TIME referred to Obama's "secret weapon," which was his appeal to people who didn't much care for politics. "A sizable chunk of the President's most ardent backers don't admire either party yet think Obama is somehow above it all, immune to all the horse trading and favor mongering that politics entails," it read.

In the last year of his final term, Obama spoke at a ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, Alabama. He said, "Because of what [the marchers] did, the doors of opportunity swung open not just for African Americans, but for every American. Women marched through those doors. Latinos marched through those doors. Asian Americans, gay Americans, and Americans with disabilities came through those doors. Their endeavors gave the entire South the chance to rise again, not by reasserting the past, but by transcending the past. What a glorious thing, Dr. King might say. What a solemn debt we owe."

In his final address to the U.N. General Assembly in 2016, he called on leaders to work together and criticized those who seek a "simple rejection of global integration." He said, "I do not believe progress is possible if our desire to preserve our identities gives way to an impulse to dehumanize or dominate another group. If our religion leads us to persecute those of another faith, if we jail or beat people who are gay, if our traditions lead us to prevent girls from going to school, if we discriminate on the basis of race or tribe or ethnicity, then the fragile bonds of civilization will fray. The world is too small, we are too packed together, for us to be able to resort to those old ways of thinking."

Left: *President Obama campaigning in Ohio in 2012.*

MEANWHILE IN 2008...

February Amy Winehouse wins six Grammy Awards, including Best New Artist and Album of the Year. **February** Fidel Castro steps down as leader of Cuba. **July** Bank of America purchases Countrywide Financial, the largest mortgage lender in the U.S.

MEANWHILE IN 2012...

February Queen Elizabeth II celebrates her Diamond Jubilee. **October** Hurricane Sandy pummels the Caribbean and the U.S. Atlantic Coast, causing $70 billion in damage. **December** A shooter kills 20 students and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

1997 *CHAIRMAN & CEO OF INTEL*

Andrew Grove

IN 1997, THE MICROCHIP WAS THE DYNAMO OF a new economy marked by a strong stock market and low levels of unemployment and inflation in the U.S. The microchip had become—like the steam engine, electricity, and the assembly line—an advance that propelled a new economy.

Andrew Grove, chairman and CEO of Intel, was the person most responsible for the amazing advancement in the power and innovative potential of microchips. In 1997, Intel made nearly 90% of the planet's PC microprocessors, and the company was worth $115 billion (more than IBM).

The decade's digital revolution provoked debate over what tech's role in society should be. Do the benefits outweigh the potential challenges? When TIME asked Grove, he responded as one would expect a brilliant, product-focused engineer would: "Technology happens. It's not good, it's not bad."

In the 1997 Person of the Year cover story, TIME predicted that the digital revolution "could spark an unprecedented millennial boom, global in scope but empowering to each individual, marked not only by economic growth but also by a spread of knowledge and freedom and true community."

Grove served as chief executive of Intel until 1998 and then served as chairman of the board until 2005.

In 1986, Grove and his wife, Eva, both Jews who fled their homelands during WWII, started the Grove Foundation, with the initial goal to support service foundations to help refugees and immigrants. He served on the board of directors for the International Rescue Committee (IRC), which brought him from Vienna to America when he was a young man. In the 1997 Person of the Year cover story, Grove recalled the day an IRC representative in Manhattan sent him out on Fifth Avenue with a blank check to buy the best hearing aid he could find (Grove suffered from hearing loss ever since he contracted scarlet fever as a boy). Over time, the Grove Foundation's focus shifted to funding services for immigrants in the most marginalized communities—Black, Indigenous, and other people of color; people with disabilities; and LGBT people.

Grove was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1995 and Parkinson's disease in 2000. He used part of his fortune to become a major voice in the movement to speed up biomedical research, working with the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. A long-time resident of the San Francisco Bay area, Grove was also a key fundraiser for the UCSF Medical Center at Mission Bay, a health-care behemoth that focuses on innovative care. In 2005, Grove made a $26 million donation to the City College of New York (CUNY)—its engineering school is now known as the Grove School of Engineering.

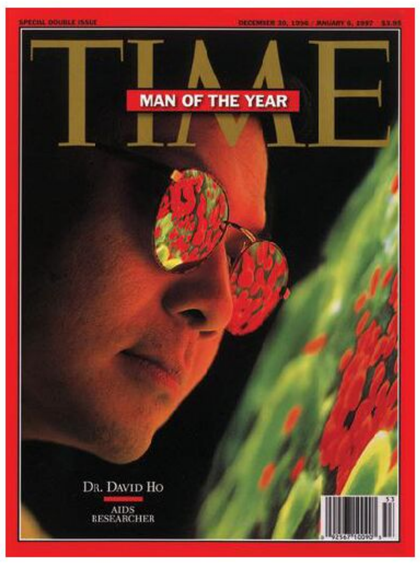
Grove died in 2016 at age 79.

Right: *Grove, in a casual look that would become ubiquitous in Silicon Valley, in 1991.*

MEANWHILE IN 1997...

January Madeleine Albright is the first woman to be U.S. Secretary of State. **June** The first book in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone,* is published in the U.K. **August** Diana, Princess of Wales, dies in a high-speed car crash in Paris.

The computer inside.



1996 *AIDS TREATMENT PIONEER*

Dr. David Ho

DR. DAVID HO GAVE HOPE TO MILLIONS IN THE fight against AIDS. Through his work, he successfully lowered the virus count in patients who received a combination of new and powerful drugs when they'd only just been infected, changing the disease profile from terminal to manageable. The tireless work by Ho and his colleagues is one of the reasons AIDS is no longer a defining disease of our time.

In the early 1980s, the Harvard Medical School grad saw patients with a puzzling array of infections. Although nobody knew it then, these were some of the earliest known cases of AIDS. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Ho suspected from the beginning that the ailment was viral in nature, and he became the fourth person in the world to isolate it. In the years following, he divided his talents between treating patients, teaching at several medical schools, and research. Characteristically modest and quick to share credit with his associates, Ho continued, as TIME said in 1996, to lay "forth clearly and succinctly some of the boldest yet most cogent hypotheses in the epic campaign against HIV." More work was yet to be done, but in 1996, Ho and his fellow scientists calmed the public's fears that the AIDS virus might be invincible.

Fast-forward nearly 30 years: Ho's work and that of other researchers gave many people living with HIV "undetectable" status, meaning that they cannot spread HIV to others and the virus is less likely to attack their immune cells. But there is still no vaccine.

Ho recalled the frustrating hits and misses often experienced by medical researchers in a 2010 TIME interview: He was sitting in the audience during an AIDS meeting in 2007 when the presenter flashed a cartoon on the screen. Along with his colleagues, Ho chuckled at the image of a blindfolded baseball player swinging mightily at an incoming pitch. But as amused as the scientists were, they were sobered too; they knew the player in the cartoon symbolized their work. A swing and a miss, the image was saying, one of many in the long battle against AIDS.

At that point, he and other AIDS scientists had been whiffing repeatedly for nearly 25 years, failing to make contact as HIV stymied them again and again. "It struck a special chord with me," Ho said of the baseball image. "I think it accurately pictured our chance of success. We all felt that frustration." Today Ho and his colleagues at Columbia University are still working on developing an AIDS vaccine.

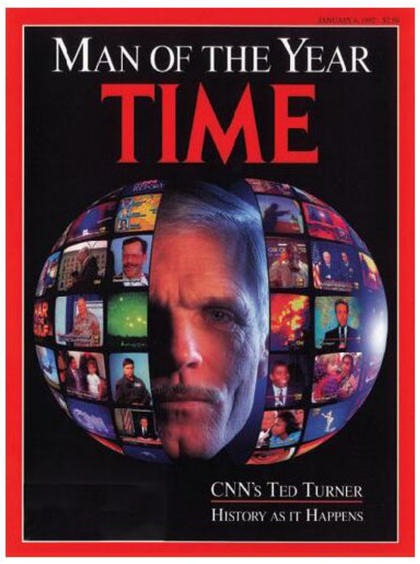
In 2020, the virus "first responder" put together a multidisciplinary team and went to work on the prevention of another deadly one: COVID-19.

"He's kind of a genius, you know," Ho's mother told TIME in 1996, "I'm not supposed to say that, but it's true."

Left: *Ho at New York's Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center in 1998.*

MEANWHILE IN 1996...

February Alanis Morissette's *Jagged Little Pill* wins Album of the Year at the Grammy Awards. **July** A pipe bomb goes off at the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, killing two and injuring 111. **August** Prince Charles and Princess Diana officially divorce after a highly publicized breakup.



1991 *FOUNDER OF CNN*

Ted Turner

AFTER HIS FATHER DIED BY SUICIDE IN 1963, the then 24-year-old Ted Turner took over the family's advertising business and turned it into a global enterprise. Turner's list of accomplishments is long: He founded the first TV superstation, he bought the Atlanta Braves, and he won America's Cup, just to name a few. He is known, even in entrepreneurial circles, as a fearless risk-taker.

Perhaps Turner's greatest gamble was founding CNN, the first 24-hour TV news network, in 1980. For most of the Gulf War, CNN was the prime source of news, information, and up-to-the-minute political intelligence. CNN put a spotlight on global affairs, forcing despotic governments to do their bloody deeds, if they dare, before a watching world. Its very existence compelled TV rivals, inside and outside the U.S., to pursue more international news and air more of it live, keeping everyday people up-to-date on happenings around the globe. In the tumultuous year of 1991, CNN awakened a village consciousness, a sense that human beings are all connected and all in it together, wherever on the planet they may be.

CNN's nimble correspondents, with cameras in hand, were on watch everywhere—they forced accountability and changed the way the world does business. When people can watch history as it happens, all are better informed.

The moniker "Prince of the Global Village," as TIME referred to him in 1991, doesn't just apply to his work in communications media—Turner is an environmentalist too. In 1990, he founded the Turner Foundation, which addresses overpopulation, clean water initiatives, and improved stewardship of the land. Its principals are "rooted in its commitment to protecting and restoring natural systems—land, air, and water—on which all life depends." In 1998, Turner donated $1 billion to the United Nations to start the United Nations Foundation. Its goal is to solve global issues, such as the climate crisis, gender inequality, infectious diseases, and human rights violations, through collective action. Turner is also the founder and cochair of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a global security firm that works to reduce nuclear and biological threats around the world.

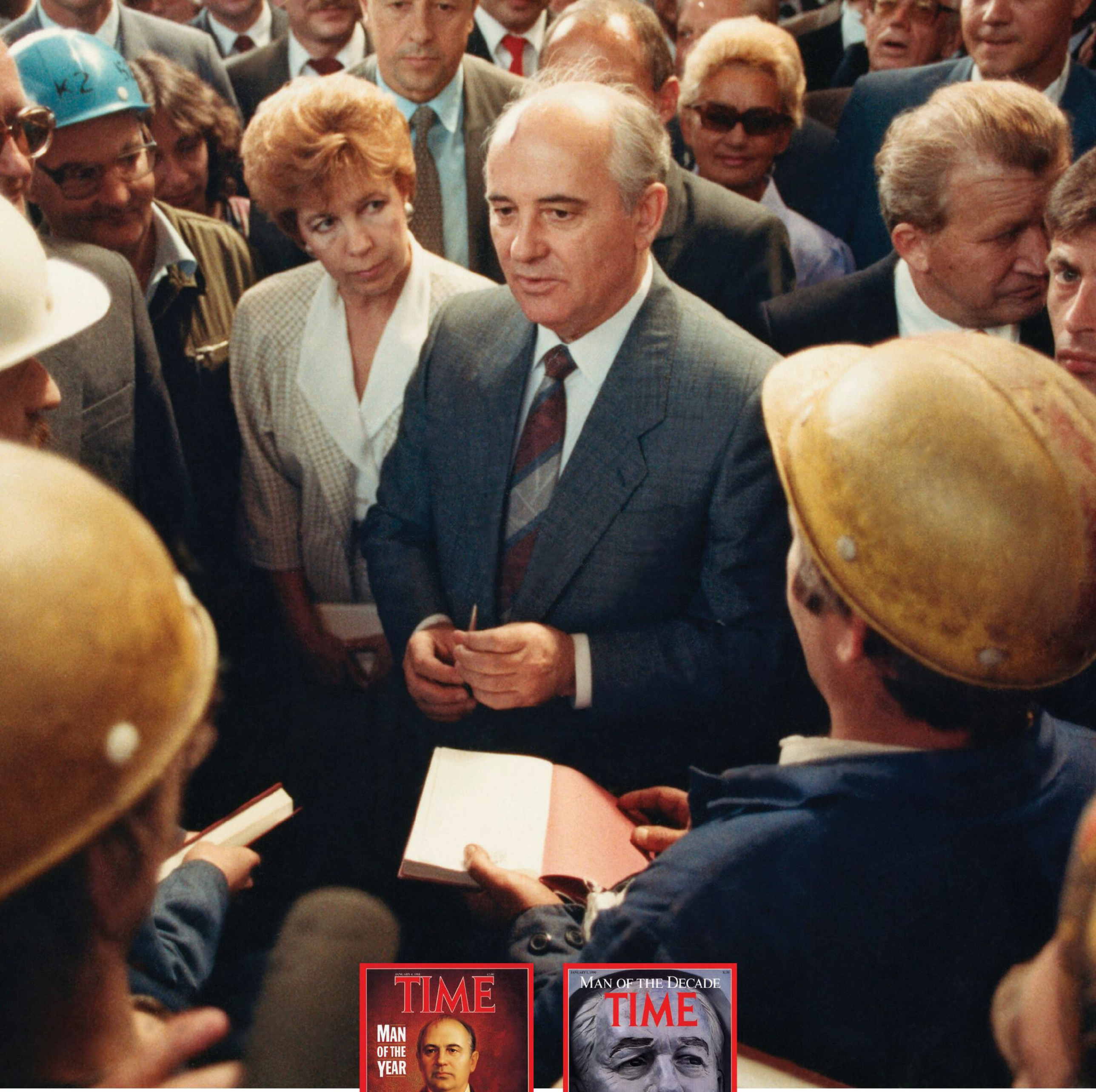
In 1991, Turner told TIME that the one lesson he drew from his father's death by suicide—the lesson he repeated year after year to his children—is that people should never set goals they can reach. "My father told me he wanted to be a millionaire, have a yacht and a plantation," Turner said, "And by the time he was 50 he had achieved all three, and he was having a very difficult time." Turner has carefully arranged his life to avoid that situation. "I'm not going to rest until all the world's problems have been solved," he said. "Homelessness, AIDS. I'm in great shape. I mean, the problems will survive me—no question about it." Turner, now 85, is still ticking away at his goals.

Right: *Turner attends the official CNN launch event on June 1, 1980, in Atlanta.*

MEANWHILE IN 1991...

February Mariah Carey wins the Best New Artist Award at the Grammys. **June** Boris Yeltsin becomes president of Russia. **July** Notorious serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer is arrested in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

CNN
CABLE NEWS NETWORK
Turner Broadcasting System



1987 | 1989 *GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION*

Mikhail Gorbachev

BY THE TIME HE WAS NAMED PERSON OF THE YEAR in 1987, Mikhail Gorbachev had become a symbol of hope for a new kind of Soviet Union: more open and more concerned with the welfare of its citizens and less with the spread of its ideology systems abroad. Virtually everything about his country and its place in world affairs seemed less ponderous and less opaque than it did before he became General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1985.

Domestically, Gorbachev legalized some small-scale private enterprises and gave state industries new freedoms. By 1987, his true test remained to be seen—whether the Soviet Union would be able to produce better food, clothing, and shelter for its citizens. But the positive impact he had made since 1985 ignited hope that the dark regimes that preceded him were a thing of the past. His glasnost (openness) policy allowed for freer speech and a freer press—unprecedented in the communist country.

In foreign affairs, Gorbachev helped guide the Soviet Union and the U.S. off the path to nuclear destruction. True, signing the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty at the Washington summit was only a small diminution of the arms race, but it was a start. Although the Soviet Union remained a single-party dictatorship, Gorbachev was willing to negotiate with the U.S. far more than any previous Soviet leader.

He was also named TIME's Person of the Decade in 1989 for his attempts to transform the Soviet Union's government. It was a system that had not been simply ineffective or inept, but inherently destructive. He worked to break up an old bloc to make way for a new Europe, altering the Soviet empire's relationship with the rest of the world and changing the nature of the empire itself. He made the end of the Cold War seem possible, and diminished the danger that a nuclear war would occur.

The day before he met with Pope John Paul II in November 1989, Gorbachev said, "We need a revolution of the mind." The metaphysics of global power had changed. Markets became more valuable than territory, and information became more powerful than military hardware. For many years, the Soviets lived in paranoid isolation, fearful of Western culture. Gorbachev aspired to correct the "deformations of socialism," as he called the legacies of Stalinism, and to right the failures of centralized economic planning and repair the maligned Russian political character that went back centuries.

But ultimately, Gorbachev was unable to create a durable system of his own. As he was pursuing reforms and fighting to hold on to power, his inner circle conspired against him, leading to a three-day coup in 1991 that left Gorbachev effectively under house arrest at his dacha in Crimea. Although the West sought to keep Gorbachev in power to advance reform in the Soviet Union, it did not work. As Gorbachev told Boris Yeltsin in 1991, "if we want democracy and reforms, we must act according to democratic rules." For Gorbachev, that meant witnessing the hammer and sickle flag, a symbol of the former Soviet regime, being replaced by the new Russian tricolor, with Yelstin in charge at the Kremlin.

"Change is rarely painless," Gorbachev wrote in his 2016 memoirs. "It affects people's lives and interests, and that is why we need to do everything possible to mitigate painful consequences. There should be no attempt to go for a 'big bang' at the outset."

Gorbachev died in Moscow in 2022 after a period of declining health.

Left: *Gorbachev speaks with shipyard workers in Szczecin, Poland, in 1988.*

MEANWHILE IN 1987...

January Aretha Franklin becomes the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. **March** Oliver Stone's war film *Platoon* wins the Academy Award for Best Picture. **August** Britain's Queen Elizabeth II issues a statute allowing women to become Order of the Garter companions.

MEANWHILE IN 1989...

July Nintendo's Game Boy goes on sale in North America. **November** The Berlin Wall falls. **December** U.S. President George H.W. Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev declare an end to the Cold War.

1986 *PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES*

Corazon Aquino

IN 1986, CORAZON AQUINO BECAME THE FIRST female president of the Philippines. She was an unlikely candidate: Prior to her fateful run for office, the quiet, well-born devout Catholic was the wife of the outspoken Liberal Party member Benigno Aquino Jr. and the doting mother to five children. Many expected her husband to take power at the end of Ferdinand Marcos' brutal dictatorship, but Marcos had other plans—his henchmen murdered Benigno in 1983.

After her husband's death, Corazon Aquino became the leader of the opposition and, in February 1986, ran for president after Marcos, whose regime was rife with intimidation and fraud, announced a snap election to legitimize his power. Aquino was proclaimed the winner after her supporters took to the streets and Marcos' own associates defected, forcing him to flee to Hawaii. The Philippines' authoritarian rule was over, and Aquino brought democracy to the flailing country.

TIME noted in the Person of the Year cover story, "If the first woman President of the Philippines was the happiest symbol in a year of symbols, she was also the most human. She showed how one individual could inspire in others a faith so powerful that it vindicated itself and changed a country's history. She brought not only a new face into politics, but also a new way of thinking about politics and the virtues it demands." She is the Filipinos' beloved Mother of Democracy.

Aquino evolved into a president who merited her six years in office. She did so not as the devout figure whose impassioned rhetoric inspired the People Power Revolution, but as an administrator driven by pure industriousness. In the end, her tenure was nothing more than a brick-by-brick laying of democracy's foundation. That, though, was more than enough.

Aquino also understood, like South Africa's Nelson Mandela, that the enduring success of People Power depended upon the leaders it put into office knowing how to make a graceful exit. Even though the Filipino electorate would surely have granted her another presidential term, in 1992 she anointed a political successor, Fidel Ramos, and eased into retirement.

In the late '80s and early '90s, democracy, if only in name, touched much of the developing world. But the legacy of People Power was constantly threatened by the repressive actions of those who claimed to represent it. Today, the Filipino government is back in the hands of the Marcos family.

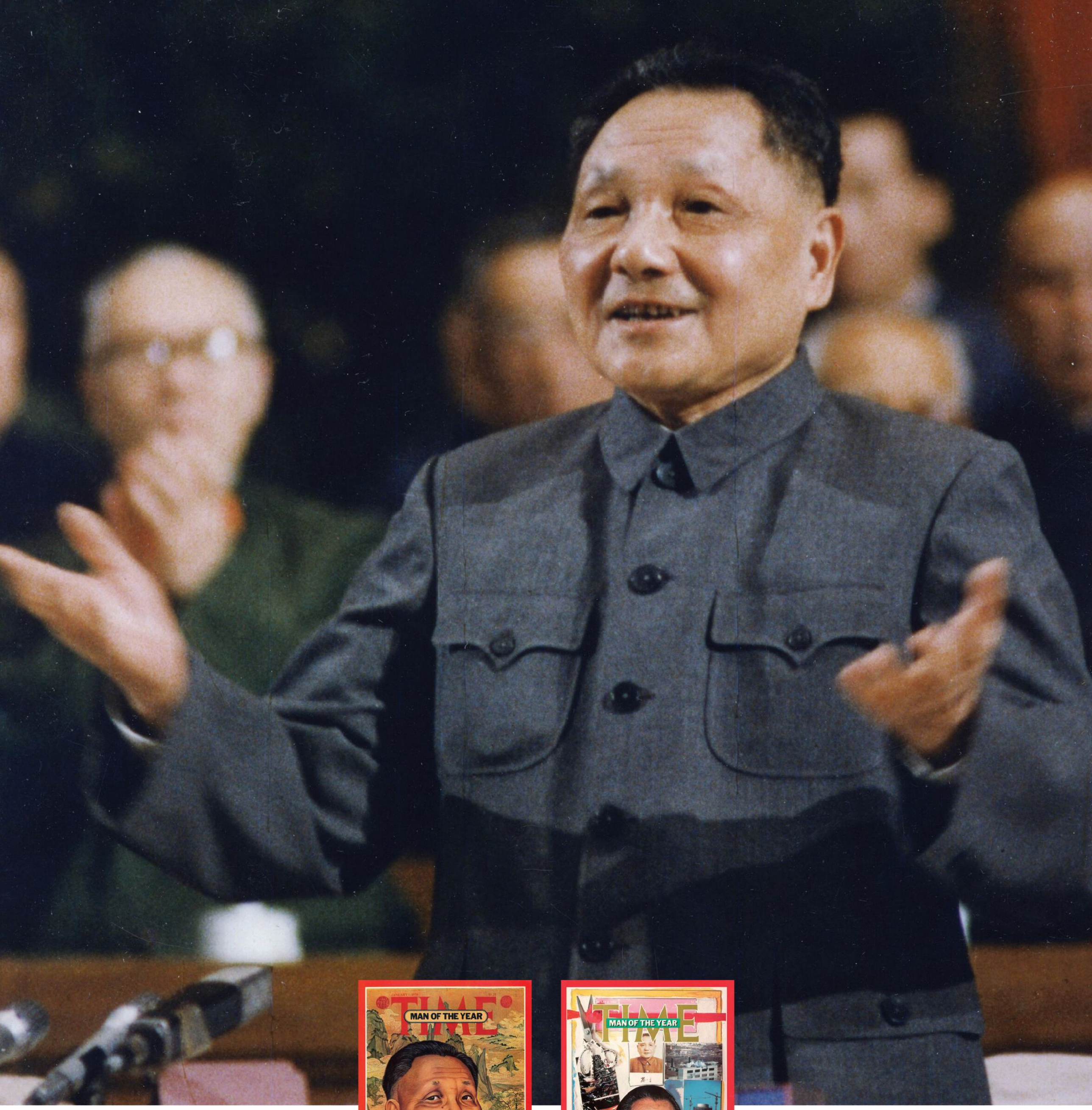
But Aquino, in her helium-inflected voice, once mused: "I came to power peacefully, so shall I keep it." Like much of what she said, this idea—that power comes as much from the consent of the governed as the barrel of a gun—seems a simple insight. But it was nothing short of revolutionary.

After she left office, Aquino stayed active in politics and was involved in various charities and socioeconomic activities. She died in 2009.

Right: *Aquino reviews troops in a parade shortly after she was declared the winner of the Philippines' 1986 presidential election.*

MEANWHILE IN 1986...

January U.S. Space Shuttle *Challenger* explodes after takeoff, killing seven. **April** A nuclear reactor at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in the Soviet Union explodes, releasing radioactive material across Europe. **September** *The Oprah Winfrey Show* debuts nationally on ABC.



1978 | 1985 *CHINA'S PARAMOUNT LEADER*

Deng Xiaoping

THROUGH THE MID 1970S, CHINA'S ECONOMY was weak, and the violent, disastrous Maoist Cultural Revolution left its people spiritless. In 1977, Deng Xiaoping launched a tremendous enterprise to propel China into the modern world. He was the principal architect of the Four Modernizations—an attempt to simultaneously improve China's agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defense.

Deng eschewed the once sacred Maoist principle of national self-reliance and opened China's gates to foreign visitors and businesses. TIME reported that in 1977, 530,000 tourists visited the country, as did thousands of capitalists seeking new investments and markets. One would have been wise to do so: China was home to a quarter of the world's population. Deng's China gave Coca-Cola exclusive selling rights, permitted Pierre Cardin to do fashion shows, and was planning to build a golf course on the outskirts of Peking.

By the close of 1978, Deng's ventures led to the United States and China agreeing to exchange ambassadors and begin normal diplomatic relations. The new relationship opened potentially lucrative avenues of trade and fresh perspectives on world politics.

TIME's 1978 Person of the Year cover story noted, "The most fascinating thing about China now is that it is a society facing almost infinite possibilities: No one, perhaps least of all the Chinese, knows how the tremendous experiment will end."

In 1985, China's Deng Xiaoping was selected as TIME Person of the Year for the second time to acknowledge his continuing work to reform China. The plans he laid out in 1977 to revamp the country's agricultural system were starting to bear fruit. Under the former Maoist system, peasant farmers lived and worked in communes and were paid the same low wages whether what they planted produced or not. Deng introduced some capitalist principles to farming: The land was still owned by the government, but farmers had the opportunity to make extra money on side plots and businesses, buy their own equipment, and build their own homes. And eventually, the people had enough to eat.

Through 1985, Deng concentrated more on industry, primarily by opening the country's economy to foreign investments. What Deng called an "open-door policy" was not quite that—the investors were carefully selected—but by the end of 1984, more than 2,000 foreign businesses had put money into China, including 70 U.S. companies. Imports included machinery, portable stereos, and Western clothing. In 1985, China was becoming a country that could cooperate with capitalist countries, more so than any other in the communist world.

As TIME noted in the 1985 Person of the Year cover story, "[Deng] has staked everything on the success of his economic reforms, arguing that whatever their theoretical justification or lack of it, they will work. And so far they generally do."

It's arguable that Deng's reform policies improved the lives of more people, faster, than anyone had done before. But breakneck economic growth and societal change had its cost—by the mid-80s, people wanted more freedom to express themselves, and perhaps Deng was not ready for it. He, along with other party elders, gave the go-ahead for the army to crush the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989, snuffing out the hope that real political reform would accompany changes in the economy, and it weakened his political power significantly. He resigned his position the same year, but still lobbied for economic reforms. His historic 1992 Southern Tour is credited with saving the country's economic reform and social stability.

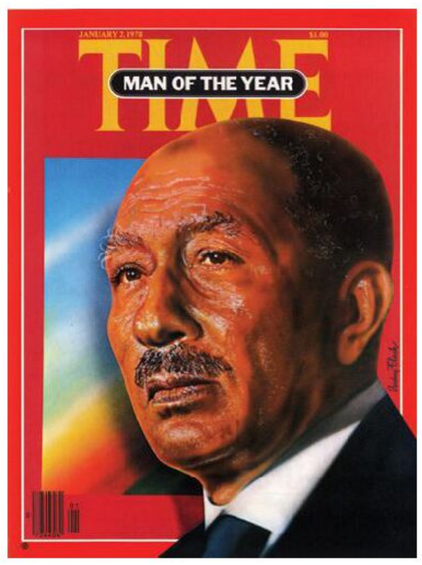
Left: *Deng after being elected chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1978.*

MEANWHILE IN 1978...

June The first "Garfield" comic strip appears in newspapers across the U.S. **July** Louise Brown, the first baby conceived via in vitro fertilization, is born in the U.K. **November** Over 900 people die by suicide at Jonestown in Guyana under the direction of cult leader Jim Jones.

MEANWHILE IN 1985...

March Mikhail Gorbachev becomes the leader of the Soviet Union. **April** Coca-Cola introduces New Coke in a massive blunder and swiftly takes it off the market. **November** The droll comic strip "Calvin & Hobbes" appears for the first time in newspapers.



1977 *PRESIDENT OF EGYPT*

Anwar Sadat

IN NOVEMBER 1977, EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR Sadat changed the course of Middle Eastern events when he became the first Arab leader to officially visit Israel to help bring peace to the Middle East, and the whole world watched. President Sadat's extraordinary pilgrimage transformed the political realities of a region blackened and embittered by impermeable hatreds and chronic war. In one stroke, the old rules of the Arab-Israeli blood feud no longer applied. Many of the endless hurdles to negotiation seemed to dissolve. Not in three decades had the dream of a real peace seemed more plausible. Sadat was named TIME's 1977 Person of the Year for his willingness to seize upon a fresh approach, for his display of personal and political courage, and for his unshakable resolve to restore a momentum for peace.

TIME observed, "In retrospect, there should not have been too much surprise that it was Sadat, of all the Middle East's leaders, who moved in an unexpected way to get peace negotiations stirring again. Sadat is a far more vigorous and visionary statesman than has been generally perceived." But Sadat's efforts were not without risks. His creative tactics could have led to more war and his own collapse in the Arab world. Fortunately, Sadat's historic first step led to the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty.

Sadat and Israel's Menachem Begin received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1978 "for jointly having negotiated peace between Egypt and Israel."

Sadat was assassinated in 1981.

The U.S. sent three former presidents, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and Richard Nixon, to Sadat's funeral. On the South Lawn of the White House before they departed, President Reagan paid tribute:

> *"Today the American people stand beside the Egyptian people, the people of a new nation with the people of an ancient land. We stand together in mourning the loss of Anwar Sadat and rededicating ourselves to the cause for which he so willingly gave his life.*
>
> *There are moments in history when the martyrdom of a single life can symbolize all that is wrong with an age and all that is right about humanity. Anwar Sadat, a man of peace in a time of violence, understood his age. In his final moments, as he had in all his days, he stood in defiance of the enemies of peace, the enemies of humanity. Today those of us who follow him can do no less. And so to those who rejoice in the death of Anwar Sadat, to those who seek to set class against class, nation against nation, people against people, those who would choose violence over brotherhood and who prefer war over peace, let us stand in defiance and let our words of warning to them be clear: in life you feared Anwar Sadat, but in death you must fear him more. For the memories of this good and brave man will vanquish you. The meaning of his life and the cause for which he stood will endure and triumph."*

Right: *Anwar Sadat bidding farewell to Israeli Prime Minister Begin at the end of his historic 1977 trip.*

MEANWHILE IN 1977...

May George Lucas releases the first *Star Wars* movie. **August** Music legend Elvis Presley dies at his home in Memphis at age 42. **October** Brazilian soccer star Pelé retires.

1976 *U.S. PRESIDENT-ELECT*

Jimmy Carter

DEMOCRAT JIMMY CARTER NARROWLY DEFEATED incumbent Republican President Gerald Ford in the 1976 presidential election, which TIME referred to as "something of a political miracle." Just a year prior, roughly 40% of Americans didn't even know who the single-term Georgia governor was. Before running for president, the charismatic Southerner was an Annapolis graduate, a Navy officer, a nuclear engineer, a successful farmer, and a businessman, which made him seem empathetic to the variety of problems facing everyday Americans.

In his acceptance speech, he addressed the common people, "Too many have had to suffer at the hands of a political economic elite who have shaped decisions and never had to account for mistakes or to suffer from injustice." As TIME observed in early 1977, "One of the serious problems of Carter's presidency may be a tendency to raise expectations too high, to promise more than he can deliver."

During his presidency, Carter streamlined the federal government, lowered federal income taxes, established the Department of Energy, and pardoned Vietnam War draft evaders. His foreign affairs included supporting human rights, negotiating treaties over the Panama Canal, setting up the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt, and negotiating SALT II with the Soviet Union. However, the 1979-1981 Iranian hostage crisis left a scar on his legacy.

While in office, Carter signed 14 major pieces of environmental legislation, which included firsts for alternative energy, federal toxic waste cleanup (the Super Fund), and fuel economy standards, and important new laws to fight air, water, and other forms of pollution. He also doubled the size of the National Park Service. Carter, who was a nuclear engineer in the Navy, understood the potentially devastating negative effects of what was then called "carbon dioxide pollution" very early on. (Today it's called global warming.) But Carter lost to Ronald Reagan in the 1980 election, and he never got to introduce legislation to implement his climate initatives.

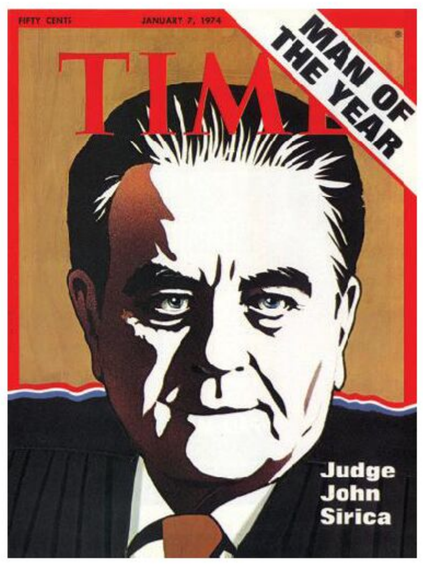
In 2023, Carter's grandson Jason Carter told TIME, "If we had listened to his presidency when they started talking about climate change, when they started talking about changing the way that we consume energy, solar and alternative sources—we would be far far ahead of where we are now. In those ways—on the environment, social justice, human rights—the presidency itself was way ahead of its time."

In 1982, Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, established the The Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project to promote human rights and enhance peace and health worldwide. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 "for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development." He is also known for his partnership with Habitat for Humanity—the Carter work project has built over 4,000 homes in 14 countries since 1984, some of which Carter helped build with his own hands.

Left: *Carter celebrates his 1976 election victory in Atlanta.*

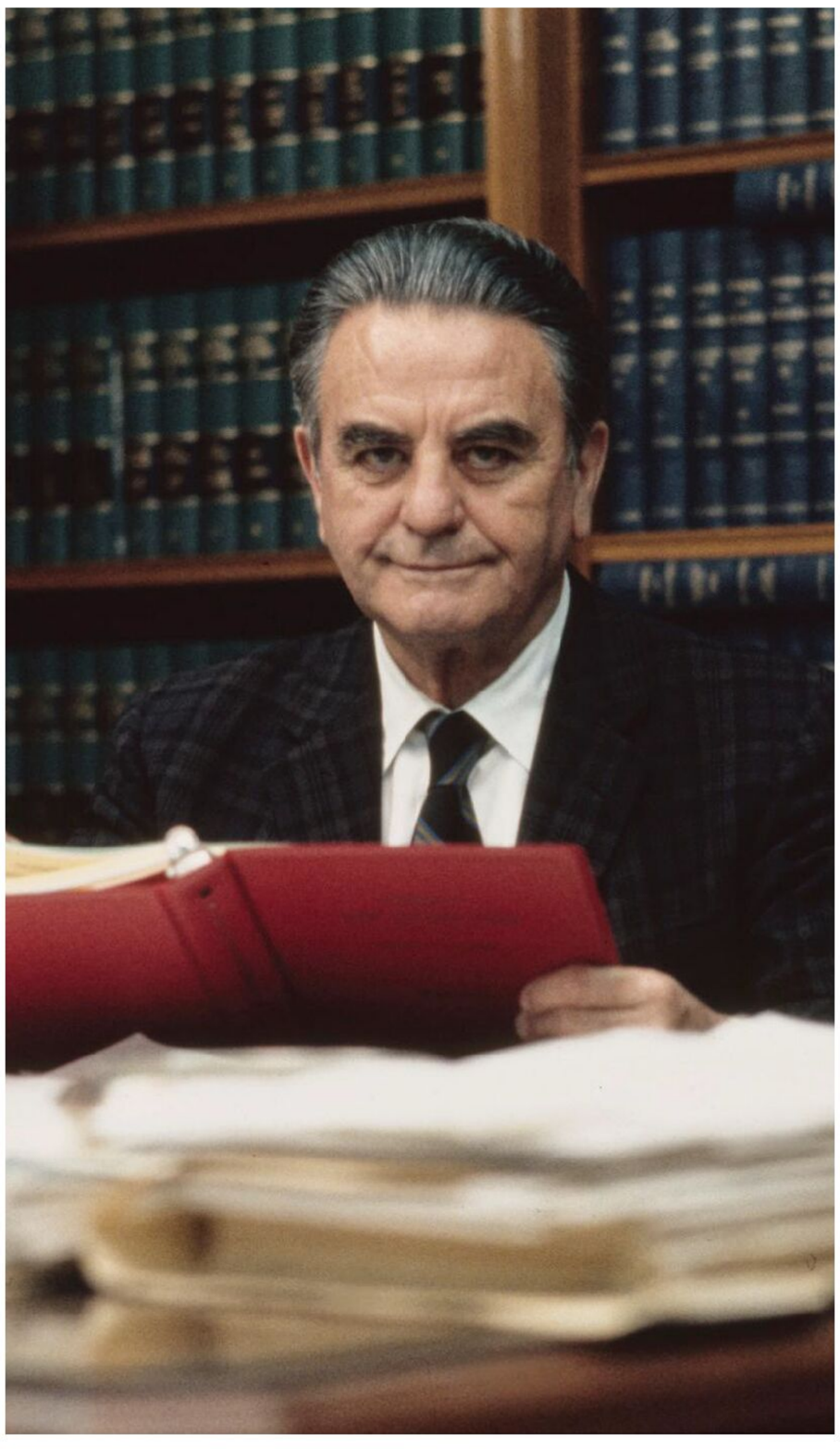
MEANWHILE IN 1976...

July Steve Wozniak demonstrates the first Apple computer prototype in Palo Alto, California. **September** NASA unveils its first space shuttle prototype, the *Enterprise*. **December** The classic film *Rocky*, starring Sylvester Stallone, is released.



1973 *SEEKER OF TRUTH*

John J. Sirica



THE WORST POLITICAL SCANDAL IN U.S. HISTORY was underway in 1973 when John Sirica, a U.S. district judge in Washington, D.C., forced Watergate into the investigative light of day. The White House insisted the Watergate break-in was "a third-rate burglary," but Sirica was not buying it. As the investigation unfolded, Watergate conspirators were charged with an appalling litany of crimes, including perjury, burglary, illegal wiretapping, obstruction of justice, destruction of evidence, fraud, extortion, solicitation of illegal campaign contributions, violation of campaign funding laws, subornation of perjury, illegal distribution of campaign literature, and various forms of conspiracy to commit illegal acts. As President Nixon made blanket denials, resisted subpoenas, and claimed executive privilege, Sirica skillfully navigated uncharted waters to find the truth.

In the wake of the scandal, millions of disenchanted Americans followed news of the proceedings, eager to see their justice system prevail after learning of the corruption in the executive branch. When Nixon refused to turn over recorded conversations to the Court, Sirica fought back, asserting his opinion, "Though the President is elected by nationwide ballot and is often said to represent all the people, he does not embody the nation's sovereignty. He is not above the law's commands."

At the time, some legal critics said that Sirica used the threat of harsh sentences to coerce defendants to talk, but as TIME observed, "Exposure of wrongdoing is, of course, the first requisite in achieving justice—and Sirica deserves the prime credit for taking those vital initial steps."

Left: *Sirica working in his office in 1973.*

MEANWHILE IN 1973...

January The U.S. officially ends its involvement in the Vietnam War by signing the Paris Peace Accords.
January The U.S. Supreme Court rules on *Roe v. Wade*, giving women the right to choose to have an abortion.
June Secretariat wins the Triple Crown.

1970 *CHANCELLOR OF WEST GERMANY*

Willy Brandt

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER THE END OF WAR II, the results of the war remained unresolved, so West Germany's chancellor, Willy Brandt, set out to create a fresh relationship between West and East. He initiated *Ostpolitik* (Eastern policy) in an effort to improve rapport in the region. In 1970, Brandt established stronger ties with East Germany and signed treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland. While visiting the latter, he famously knelt and took a moment of silence at the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes, symbolically recognizing the Holocaust in Nazi-occupied Poland. The gesture is referred to as *Kniefall von Warschau* (the Warsaw genuflection).

In its 1970 Person of the Year cover story, TIME reported, "As the theme for a young decade, [Brandt's diplomacy] offers immense promise for the peaceful future of Europe. For a German statesman, that is a remarkable achievement. It is also a measure of how long a road the Germans have traveled in the quarter of a century since 1945, when their defeated country lay in noisome rubble, and since that day in 1871 when, at Versailles, modern Germany was born amid boasts of glory and hopes of greatness."

For his unification efforts, Brandt received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971. In 1973, one of Brandt's personal assistants was outed as a spy. Brandt resigned in 1974, but retained his seat in the Bundestag, and remained leader of the Social Democratic Party until 1987. He was president of Socialist International from 1976 to 1992, and headed the Independent Commission for International Developmental Issues, which released a report in 1980 that called for changes in the way developing countries were perceived.

Right: *Brandt at a press conference in 1970.*

MEANWHILE IN 1970...

April Paul McCartney announces that he is leaving the Beatles. **April** Astronauts James Lovell Jr., John Swigert, and Fred Haise, along with Mission Control in Houston, successfully land the *Apollo 13* spacecraft after an oxygen tank exploded onboard. **May** National Guard troops kill four student protesters and injure nine others in an antiwar demonstration at Kent State University in Ohio.

1963 *AMERICA'S GANDHI*

Martin Luther King Jr.

THE YEAR 1963 MARKED THE BOILING POINT FOR racial tensions in America, and Martin Luther King Jr. was at the center of it. Between January 16 and March 29, 1963, the civil rights leader went on a whirlwind speaking tour, presenting 28 speeches in 16 cities across the nation. In April, he led demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, where law enforcement officers beat countless protesters and jailed more than 3,600. King intended to get the nation's attention, and he did. In the months following, 800 Black-led demonstrations and sit-ins popped up all over the country. In August, King was one of the leaders of the March on Washington, where nearly a quarter of a million attendees of all races gathered around the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to demand civil rights legislation. It was there that King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

One could argue the dream is still not a reality today, but there's no doubt the brave work King did in 1963 gave the fight for civil rights its stature.

More than a half century since King's assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968, those who picked up his torch continue to fight for some of the same causes he was lobbying for at the time he was killed.

Experts note that one of the main campaigns King was working on at the time of his death remains unresolved. But, in typical fashion, he had several irons in the fire at that moment in 1968.

The week after King's death, TIME's story on the assassination framed King's death in Memphis as an irony: "the conqueror of Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma" had died while participating in "a minor labor dispute," referring to the Memphis sanitation-workers strike that had brought him to Tennessee. King had been invited to the city by pastor James Lawson, a Montgomery bus boycott veteran. There, 1,300 predominantly Black workers had been striking for two months for fair wages and better working conditions. The strike was prompted by the death of two of their colleagues, who were crushed to death in the compactor of a garbage truck—the only place where they could wait out a rainstorm in a white neighborhood where residents were uneasy about Black people hanging around where they lived.

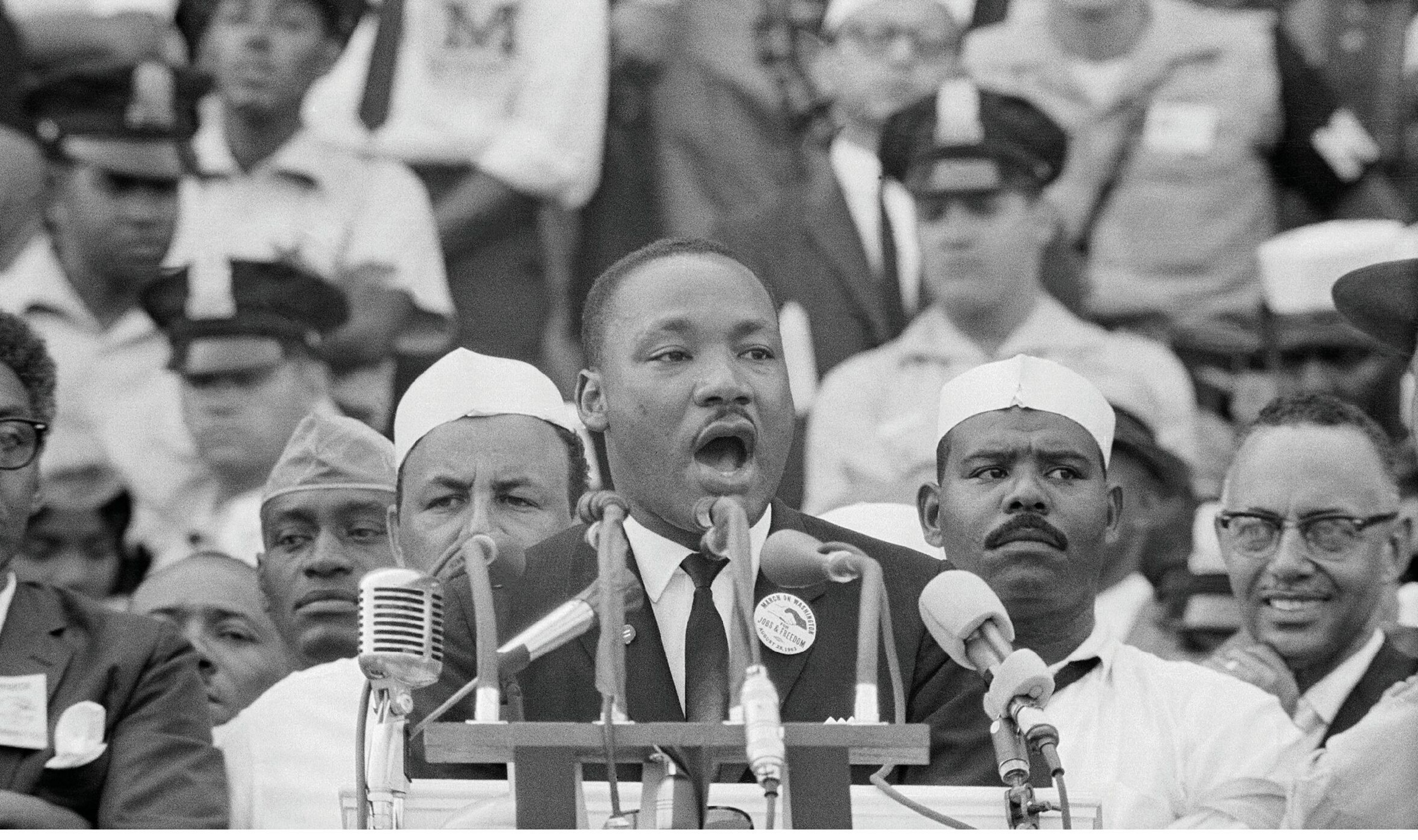
Some of King's closest advisers at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference opined that Memphis was merely a distraction from larger concerns.

At the time, King was supposed to be planning a bigger demonstration to be held in Washington in a few months: the Poor People's Campaign. The march had been in the works for months, since King called for thousands of Americans living in poverty to travel to the capital to demand economic equality in late 1967. King was partly inspired by the so-called Bonus Army's actions in 1932, when starving World War I veterans came to Washington to demand the payments of bonuses they'd been promised for their service. That march was a factor in the later passage of the GI Bill, according to Taylor Branch, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-1963*.

King and his team were planning the grand event at a troubled time for the movement, and the trouble only increased after King came out in opposition to the Vietnam War, most famously during an April 4, 1967, speech at Riverside Church in New York City. Money from big donors had begun to dry up even before King spoke against the war, and his antiwar statements only exacerbated their money problem, according to Trey Ellis, executive producer of the 2018 HBO documentary *King in the Wilderness*, which focused on this later period of King's life. After President Lyndon B. Johnson broke his alliance with King, many donors followed suit.

"The cost of doing business with Johnson was to, at a minimum, stay silent about the escalating war in Vietnam, which is where a lot of resources were going," says Clarence Lang, an expert on African American labor history and Dean of the College of the Liberal Arts and professor of African American studies at Penn State. "King was calling out the Johnson administration for declaring a 'war on poverty,' instituting these Great Society programs, [but] essentially starving them."

WE MARCH


MARCH ON WASHINGTON
FOR
JOBS & FREEDOM
AUGUST 28, 1963

PALMS
FIGHT FOR FREEDOM
FIGHT FOR FREEDOM
JOIN
STOP
JIM CROW

King, however, saw the deep connection between his larger campaign for economic equality and what was going on in Memphis. In a March 18, 1968, speech to the sanitation workers, he famously declared, "What does it profit a man to be able to eat at an integrated lunch counter if he doesn't have enough money to buy a hamburger?" That speech was so successful that he was invited back to march with the strikers on March 28.

But violence broke out. A policeman fatally shot a 16-year-old African American teen and dozens were injured. King didn't want to leave Memphis on that note.

"He had to come back a third time. He had to prove there could be a nonviolent march because he was blamed for the violence," says Clayborne Carson, founding director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. "He knew that if he couldn't control the violence in Memphis at a much smaller event, that this would undermine the Poor People's Campaign, so he felt he had to come back and show that nonviolence could work."

Yet violence was exactly how it ended, when James Earl Ray shot King on the second floor balcony of Memphis' Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968.

Historians say the Poor People's Campaign essentially disintegrated after King's death. Though the March on Washington did take place later that spring, it didn't get as much attention as expected. TIME characterized the event as "motivated by disillusionment and despair." Many of the ideas on the campaign's platform, such as a guaranteed income, have never been realized. And while new leaders emerged—Jesse Jackson, for example, became more visible in the movement after King's assassination, in part because of his work on King's late-in-life campaigns—it became clearer than ever that many considered King the glue that kept organizers united.

But King's death didn't spell the end of all the projects he'd had underway. Memphis eventually cut a deal with the sanitation workers, and at least one big national policy that King had been pushing for was passed after his assassination, perhaps as an homage to King and a concession to the people left angry and sad by his murder. The Fair Housing Act, which banned formal discrimination in the rent and sale of housing, had stalled in Congress, but it passed just days after King's death. "There's a wave of riots in a lot of northern cities including Washington, D.C., [after his death] and the Fair Housing Act is seen as a possible way of preventing more," says Philip A. Klinkner, professor of government at Hamilton College and author of *The Unsteady March: The Rise and Decline of Racial Equality in America*. "It only passes because of these incredibly violent riots after the death of this apostle of nonviolence, so there's a lot of irony laden in that."

But, Klinker argues, aside from affirmative action in the '70s, "there are no more major legislative victories for the movement."

That means those who believed in the ideas King championed at the end of his life are still fighting. Modern activists have picked up the Poor People's Campaign name, and parallels can be seen in everything from the fight for the $15 minimum wage to the Black Lives Matter movement. Peter Ling, a King biographer, has called the Poor People's Campaign the civil rights leader's "most relevant campaign" for today's world.

"The stirrings of activism among young people, I think, are indications of what we have failed to accomplish back in the '60s," Stanford's Clayborne Carson told TIME in 2018. "I think today is about the first time in the last 50 years where you see young people beginning to confront these issues." *—with Olivia B. Waxman*

Page 33: *King waves to the crowds at the 1963 March on Washington.* ***Top Left:*** *King delivering his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial.* ***Bottom Left:*** *King leads a parade through downtown Detroit in June 1963.*

MEANWHILE IN 1963...

March Due to high costs of upkeep, the Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary is shut down. **July** The United States Postal Service launches the Zoning Improvement Plan (ZIP) code. **November** President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas.

1961 *35TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES*

John F. Kennedy

WHEN JOHN F. KENNEDY WAS ELECTED IN November 1960, he had the confident spirit of a war hero—at 43, he was the youngest U.S. president ever to hold the job. His campaign promises for a "new frontier" and to "get America moving again" suggested all the U.S. needed was vim and vigor. But after his first year as the leader of the free world, he found that it was hard enough just to keep the old problems from getting out of hand. According to TIME, "He learned better; but learn he did. And in so doing he not only made 1961 the most endlessly interesting and exciting presidential year within recent memory; he also made the process of his growing up to be President a saving factor for the U.S. in the Cold War." It was Kennedy's coming of age and his ability to convince the communists that he was willing to back up his big words with brave actions that made him TIME's 1961 Person of the Year.

By the end of 1961, Kennedy was immensely popular, even after the Soviet Union's Space Race win and the Bay of Pigs invasion disaster the previous spring. In the most recent Gallup Poll before the issue's publication, 78% of the American people gave his performance a thumbs-up. Big numbers, sure, but Kennedy knew that he needed to work carefully and tirelessly to balance his gift of persuasion with effective public and foreign policy or risk losing ground.

On January 20, 1961, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was sworn in as the 35th President of the United States. A dignified top hat sat squarely upon his head, but beneath it a boyish grin showed that the young man was having the time of his life. And when he had taken the oath of office, he stood bareheaded in a bitter winter wind and delivered an inaugural address that crackled with the gusto of youth, yet had an eloquence that was ageless.

"In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hours of maximum danger," he said, as his breath steamed in the crisp air. "I do not shrink from this responsibility—I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people, or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world."

Despite his narrow margin of victory, Kennedy's advent to office had raised hopes high. The rhetoric of his inaugural address led to extravagrant overpraise. Even so, he had asked to be judged by the highest standards, but he died before achieving them.

His nation was prosperous and at peace. But if a historical scoreboard would not record many errors, it would list a few hits and fewer runs. Kennedy was a subject of boundless fascination for Americans, yet he aroused no such passions of either love or hatred as did his predecessors such as Franklin D. Roosevelt. In the long view of history, his administration might be known less for the substance of its achievement than for its style.

Style he had. He was born with it, and he displayed it at every stage of his life—as the heir to a savagely competitive spirit and a million-dollar trust fund from his father; as the wartime hero of *PT-109*; as the student of power; as the driving politician who went from the House to the Senate to the White House. "Why do you want to be President?" Kennedy was asked in the summer of 1960. His reply: "Because that's where the power is."

In his style was a tough wit. When he met Nikita Khrushchev for the first time in Vienna in 1961, he noticed a medal on the Russian's chest and asked what it was. When Khrushchev replied that it symbolized the Lenin Peace Prize, Kennedy snapped back: "I hope you keep it." Again, when he spoke at a big-money fund-raising dinner in Denver, he looked over the audience for a moment, then cracked: "I am touched by your attendance—but, of course, not as deeply touched as you were."

To Kennedy, his image was all-important. Few presidents have ever been so preoccupied with their public relations, and few so sensitive to criticism. Kennedy was known to call journalists at their homes to blast them

for something they had reported. Yet he enjoyed the company of newspeople and offered them his time and confidences. Occasionally he would even take a reporter down to the White House pool, float on his back in the lukewarm water, and talk—off the record—of his problems and prospects.

During one such sojourn early in his administration, a reporter, between splashes, asked him if he would want to serve as president for more than two terms—if he could. "It's against the law," said Kennedy. "Anyway, I don't want this job more than eight years. Look at it. Laos may go to hell again next week. There's this nuclear testing thing. Berlin, Vietnam—all that. Yeah, I know that's what makes it exciting, that's what makes it challenging. But eight years seems enough."

Instead of eight years, he got 34 months and two days. During that period, President Kennedy may have made mistakes—but he made them with the same energy, the same activist style that was in a sense his greatest strength. In 1962, when he thought that Big Steel had double-crossed him by announcing price boosts, he reacted furiously—he brought all the political and police powers at his command to bear on the industry and damaged, almost irreparably, his relationships with the country's business community.

His critics claimed that he placed politics over principle, that he became an all-out adherent of civil rights legislation only after the movement had placed a vote-getting premium on such legislation, that his tax-cut program was aimed more at the 1964 elections than at true fiscal reform. His relations with Congress, never good, deteriorated his last year—and the 88th Congress set a record for nonachievement.

Kennedy was a fighter, and while he might have seemed to hedge or retrench while under political fire on occasion, he appeared to wilt only once: during the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco. As word of the debacle came into the White House, the President's natural aggressiveness, the competitive spirit that was his family hallmark, appeared to desert him almost entirely. An aide, watching him sink into indecisive despondency, remarked: "This is the first time that Jack Kennedy ever lost anything."

But Kennedy also had his fine presidential moments. To many, the brightest came in October 1962, when he set up a naval blockade that forced Nikita Khrushchev to remove the missiles the Soviets smuggled into Cuba. During that dramatic showdown, which both Kennedy and Khrushchev later said had brought the world to the brink of thermonuclear war, Kennedy remarked, "This secret, swift and extraordinary buildup of Communist missiles—in an area well known to have a special and historical relationship to the U.S. and the nations of the Western Hemisphere—is a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo, which cannot be accepted by this country if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend or foe." Kennedy made Khrushchev back down—although not so far as he, and certainly not his critics, would have liked.

If President Kennedy himself were to have named the achievement of which he felt proudest, it probably would have been the signing of the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963.

Hardly had he taken office than the Soviet Union broke the three-year moratorium that had existed on atmospheric testing. Kennedy reluctantly ordered new U.S. tests in September 1961. Said he: "We have no other choice in fulfillment of the responsibilities of the U.S. to its own citizens and to the security of other free nations." But he hated to do it, and once confided to a close friend: "It really doesn't matter as far as you and I are concerned. What really matters is all the children." Kennedy worked constantly and with dedication to bring about that treaty that was finally initialed in July 1963—and it was due far more to his persistent efforts than to the so-called "Spirit of Moscow" that it finally came about.

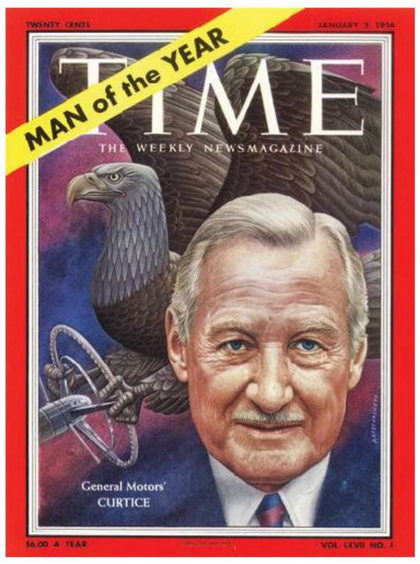
Although at the time of his death by assassination on November 22, 1963, domestic and international problems still bristled about him, what Kennedy wanted more than anything else was to be re-elected the following year. That desire did not spring from an unnatural greed for power or his driving competitive spirit, but from his feeling that if he could return to the White House with a fresh and stronger mandate, he would be better able to achieve solutions to the problems that beset his nation.

He never got the chance. And because he did not, perhaps it was Kennedy who, in that memorable inaugural address, best pronounced the historian's verdict of his own brief time in the presidency: "All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin."

Page 37: *Kennedy at his desk on his first day as President of the United States.* ***Left:*** *President Kennedy and First Lady Jackie Kennedy in 1961.*

MEANWHILE IN 1961...

April The Soviet Union launches the first human in space, Yuri Gagarin, on *Vostok 1.* **April** Cuban forces kill 118 and capture 1,202 more Cuban exiles who were sent by the U.S. to overthrow Fidel Castro. **August** East Germany starts building the Berlin Wall.



1955 *PRESIDENT OF GENERAL MOTORS*

Harlow Curtice

THE YEAR 1955 BROUGHT A WAVE OF ECONOMIC prosperity across the country. Perhaps the most significant symbol of America's expanding economy was the automobile. In 1955, 8 million American automobiles were produced and sold, half of which were made and marketed by General Motors under the leadership of its president, Harlow Curtice.

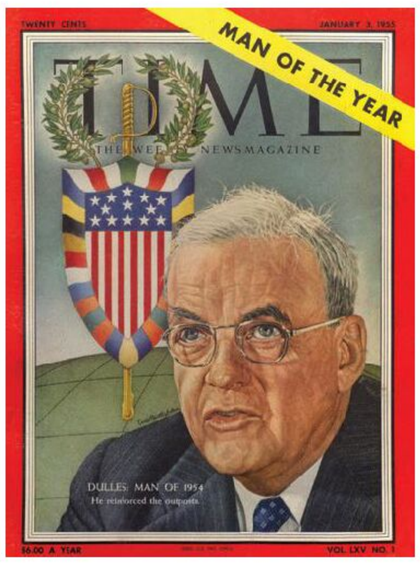
At the time, GM was the world's biggest manufacturing corporation, the first to record $1 billion in net profits in a year. As TIME admits in its 1955 Person of the Year story, being a great business mogul doesn't immediately qualify one to become Person of the Year, but the "phenomenal figures measure [Curtice] off as first among scores of equals whose skill, daring, and foresight are forever opening new frontiers for the expanding American economy by granting millions to colleges, making new toasters that pop up twice as fast, or planning satellites to circle the earth." In 1954, Curtice literally bet $1 billion on the success of GM, and his postwar boom confidence spread to other businesspeople and industrialists. Consequently, the U.S. was enjoying a rising standard of living and all the perks that went with it.

Curtice was known to work long hours and lived by the creed, "Do it the hard way. Do it better than it needs to be done." He retired in 1958, shortly after his 65th birthday, and died in 1962. He was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in 1971.

Left: *Curtice addressing a group of about 500 business leaders at a 1955 luncheon in New York.*

MEANWHILE IN 1955...

July Disneyland theme park opens in Anaheim, California. **November** The U.S. begins its involvement in the Vietnam War. **December** Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger.



1954 *U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE*

John Foster Dulles

JOHN FOSTER DULLES WENT ABOUT HIS JOB AS a missionary-at-large. According to TIME, in 1954, he logged 101,521 miles on journeys all over the world to block communist gains in Southeast Asia. His efforts culminated in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), which was comprised of eight countries.

Of the eight SEATO members, only two were in Southeast Asia. The rest were powers that had vested interests in squashing communist uprisings in the region. Because SEATO failed to coordinate the military efforts of its members, it is not considered a great historical success, but its cultural and education funding has provided long-term benefits to people living in Southeast Asian countries. SEATO disbanded in 1977.

However, in January 1955, the TIME editors who selected the Person of the Year couldn't predict the future. What they did know was the U.S. was growing more and more weary of communist threats worldwide, and it "needed all its strength and confidence to handle 1954's struggle with communism, which has been the overriding issue of every year since 1945."

By the time Dulles resigned from office due to a cancer diagnosis in 1959, he logged a total of 559,988 miles working tirelessly to keep diverse peoples and leaders united in common purpose—he negotiated skillfully at scores of world conferences. He was the clear, stern conscience of freedom.

Dulles died a month after his resignation.

Right: *Dulles arriving in London to meet with U.K. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony Eden in April 1954.*

MEANWHILE IN 1954...

May The U.S. Supreme Court rules that segregating public schools is unconstitutional. **November** Ellis Island is officially closed by the U.S. government. **December** Senator Joseph McCarthy is formally censured by the U.S. Senate, bringing his communist witch hunt to an end.

1953 *CHANCELLOR OF WEST GERMANY*

Konrad Adenauer

WEST GERMANY WAS ON THE REBOUND LESS than a decade after WWII ended, and it was largely due to the efforts of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. His policies led to West German democracy, stability, and economic prosperity. He gained widespread support and was reelected in 1953; nearly all the communists and Nazis who lingered in the country's leadership were ousted.

On the foreign policy front, Adenauer knew if West Germany played Russia against the West, the communists might take over, but playing neutral could risk an eternal divide between West Germany and East Germany. Instead, he worked to gain the respect of Western powers—a tall order considering the destruction Germany had caused in the war.

Although there were still political issues needing attention concerning the Big Three world powers (Great Britain, United States and Soviet Union), at the close of 1953, especially in relation to France, West Germany was poised to take a seat at the table. As TIME reported in January 1954, the prior year "was good for the democracies and bad for Communism."

Adenauer became Chancellor at 73—an age when most men's careers are finished. In the ensuing years, "*der Alte*" (the Old Man), as he was known, did more than make Germany respectable again; even as he bluntly admitted his country's guilt for war and for Nazism's horrors, he made clear to most of the world that a whole nation cannot be held guilty for all time. He himself distrusted his fellow countrymen—the "carnivorous sheep" who had followed Hitler to destruction—yet he also believed that "something good can and must be made of the Germans."

Adenauer's solution was to lead his conquered nation "securely into the community of free and democratic peoples of the Christian West." He resigned as Chancellor in 1963 at age 87, and he remained head of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany until he turned 90.

Left: *Adenauer on the balcony of his home in Rhoendorf, West Germany, in September 1953.*

MEANWHILE IN 1953...

January Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes the 34th U.S. president. **March** Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Union, dies. **July** The Korean War ends.

1952 *BRITISH QUEEN*

Elizabeth II

WHEN 25-YEAR-OLD PRINCESS ELIZABETH WAS vacationing in Kenya with her husband, Philip, in February 1952, she had no idea that a call would come that would change her life forever. Her father, King George VI, had died, and she was now the Queen of England. She rushed home to trade her life of relatively careless luxury for one of steadfast duty.

The British (and most of the rest of the world) were weary and discouraged in 1952 and needed a breath of fresh air. Elizabeth's significance was, as TIME reported in January 1953, of "a fresh young blossom on roots that had weathered many a season of wintry doubt." After the loss of two male monarchs, the young queen brought to mind the "great past" the British had under Elizabeth I and Victoria, and the world looked on with new hope that she might be an omen to a great future.

Elizabeth's coronation was set for June 2, 1953, so throughout 1952, Britons were busy making plans and anticipating the day much like one would look forward to a favorite daughter's wedding. As a show of kinship with her people, she decided to permit her coronation to be televised so that all who wanted to could share in the event.

When Elizabeth was crowned, she became Queen of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. When she addressed the public, she gave a memorable speech that remains a highlight of her reign. She thanked the public for its support and promised to do right by the nation. "Many thousands of you came to London from all parts of the Commonwealth and Empire to join in the ceremony, but I have been conscious too of the millions of others who have shared in it by means of wireless or television in their homes. All of you, near or far, have been united in one purpose. It is hard for me to find words in which to tell you of the strength which this knowledge has given me," she said.

She added: "Therefore, I am sure that this, my Coronation, is not the symbol of a power and a splendor that are gone but a declaration of our hopes for the future, and for the years I may, by God's Grace and Mercy, be given to reign and serve you as your Queen."

At the close of 1952, Elizabeth made her famous holiday address from Sandringham, saying, "Many grave problems and difficulties confront us all, but with a new faith in the old and splendid beliefs given us by our forefathers, and the strength to venture beyond the safeties of the past, I know we shall be worthy."

Elizabeth's coronation was the first major international event to be broadcast on TV—20 million people from around the world tuned in. Contrary to her socially conservative grandmother, Queen Victoria, Elizabeth wanted to be seen. Not "seen" in the TikTok influencer sense, but seen as a servant to the people. She was a modest, stoic queen who appeared in public as often as she could, right up to shortly before her death. The last public photos of Elizabeth, appointing Liz Truss as prime minister, were taken two days before she died in September 2022. Of her grandmother's reluctance to perform public duties, Elizabeth once said, "I have to be seen to be believed."

Much has been written about Elizabeth's steadfast devotion to public duty over her long tenure as monarch, but her commitment to service began well before she took the throne. Young Elizabeth turned 18 in 1944, when WWII was ravaging Europe and thousands of women signed up to fill auxiliary military roles as well as essential civil jobs—from driving buses to milking cows—that were left vacant as men went into combat. Princess Elizabeth advocated for herself to serve as well, and eventually the King gave in and granted her an honorary commission as second subaltern—basically the equivalent of a second lieutenant—in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS).

She began training in March 1945. Per royal decree from her father, she was given no special rank or privilege. (She did later earn a promotion to junior commander.) At the time, the Associated Press

reported that she was the first woman in the royal family to be "a full-time active member in the women's service."

Though not a combat role, serving in the ATS was not without its risks. The service saw its first death in 1942, when a woman working at an anti-aircraft station was killed by a bomb. Nor was it something those with privilege sought to avoid; Winston Churchill's daughter Mary also served in the ATS.

Once she joined up, the Princess passed a military driving test, learned to read maps, and worked repairing engines. (She did sleep at Windsor Castle, though, rather than in the camp with her fellow ATS members.)

Until her death at age 96, Queen Elizabeth II was the monarch of 15 countries in the Commonwealth that are home to around 150 million people. The U.K. also currently holds an additional 14 overseas territories that are home to another 300,000 people.

Elizabeth's seven-decade reign made her the longest-serving head of state in the world. Her reign spanned 15 British prime ministers and 14 U.S. presidents. According to TIME's obituary, "The Queen had remained a stoic, almost timeless figure in the public's eye, carrying out her royal duties despite the inconvenience of advancing age and when her private life was in turmoil."

Elizabeth traveled the globe as an ambassador for British achievements, acts of charity, and values. She was also devoted to upholding the "special relationship" between the U.K. and the U.S., engaging with every president from Harry Truman to Joe Biden.

The world changed in profound ways during her long reign, but many saw her as a steadfast rock of patriotic duty. As her grandson Prince William wrote in the preface to a 2015 biography: "I think I speak for my generation when I say that the example and continuity provided by the Queen is not only very rare among leaders but a great source of pride and reassurance … I am privileged to have the Queen as a model for a life of service to the public."

However, it's important to note that the length of her reign and her personal popularity may have forestalled a full discussion about the impact of British colonization. "I think Elizabeth's rule prevented a reckoning and allowed for a sense of continuity and continued denial about the extent of change in the last 70 years," Priya Satia, a history professor at Stanford University who specializes in the British empire, told TIME in 2022. "Decolonization was supposed to force the acknowledgment of wrong. That never came because it was always masked by the continuity of the Queen."

That may be, but Elizabeth, who was thrust into a role she did not choose, dedicated herself to service. Former Prime Minister David Cameron said she "has been a rock of stability in an era in which our country has changed so much. And we could not be more proud of her. She has served this country with unerring grace, dignity, and decency." *—with Anisha Kohli and Moises Mendez II*

Page 45: *Elizabeth II delivers her first Christmas broadcast in 1952.* ***Above:*** *Princess Elizabeth working on a car at the Auxiliary Territorial Service Training Centre in Surrey in 1945.* ***Right:*** *Queen Elizabeth after her coronation on June 2, 1953.*

MEANWHILE IN 1952...

January *The Today Show* debuts on NBC. **May** The first Mr. Potato Head toys are distributed by Hasbro. **December** Thick smog in London kills at least 4,000 people.

1945 | 1948 *33RD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES*

Harry Truman

AT THE START OF 1945, MISSOURI-BORN HARRY Truman was the "common man's common man" U.S. vice president. Truman barely saw President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the first few months of their term; he was not even briefed about the U.S. development of atomic weapons. But when FDR died on April 12, 1945, the mounting problems of WWII were set solely in Truman's hands. When he learned of FDR's death, he told reporters, "I don't know if you fellas ever had a load of hay fall on you, but when they told me what happened yesterday, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me."

Although the war in Europe officially came to an end in early May, the Japanese refused to surrender. Truman knew that the U.S. had the technology to end the war in Japan, and he decided to use it. In early August 1945, he authorized the use of two atomic bombs to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The bombs killed 105,000 people and injured countless more. Japan surrendered shortly thereafter.

The horror of this decision was not lost on Truman. He said it was the hardest decision he ever had to make, "But the President cannot duck hard problems—he cannot pass the buck." In the following years, Truman maintained that although the Japanese death toll was huge, the bombings saved countless lives on both sides.

The year 1948 marked the second time President Truman was named TIME Person of the Year. Truman initially assumed office after Franklin D. Roosevelt's death in 1945, then a surprising chain of events in the 1948 presidential race resulted in his come-from-behind victory. That spring, Truman's approval rating was a mere 36%, and his Democratic Party had separated into factions based mostly on civil and state rights. Things didn't look good for Democrats, and pundits had no doubt that the 1948 election would put Republican Thomas Dewey in the top spot. But Truman took his campaign straight to the average American people on his whistle-stop tours. What the common folks saw was a simple, sincere man fighting the out-of-touch elite Dewey and the "Do Nothing Congress" against overwhelming odds. They related to what Truman was saying.

The press was so confident that Dewey would win, the major polling organizations stopped polling well before the election and missed the point when Truman surged past Dewey. As TIME reported on January 3, 1949, "He had humbled the confident, discomfited the savants and the pollsters, and given a new luster to the old-fashioned virtues of work and dogged courage. The year 1948 was Harry Truman's year."

Truman's elected term was defined by an escalation in the Cold War. In 1949, China's communists won their long civil war, and the Soviet Union tested a nuclear bomb. In 1950, Truman authorized the development of a hydrogen bomb in an attempt to lead the arms race with the Soviets. Truman was a fierce anti-Communist, establishing a containment policy against the Soviet Union. However, when Gen. Douglas MacArthur defied Truman and pushed for a more aggressive stance against Communist Asia during the Korean War—specifically, to invade certain cities in China—Truman, seeking to avoid another global conflict, fired the general. This, and the lingering war in North Korea, brought accusations that Truman and his advisers were soft on communism. Although he was unpopular at the end of his presidency, Truman regained respect in the following decades for his social programs and for not allowing the Cold War to escalate to world-war proportions.

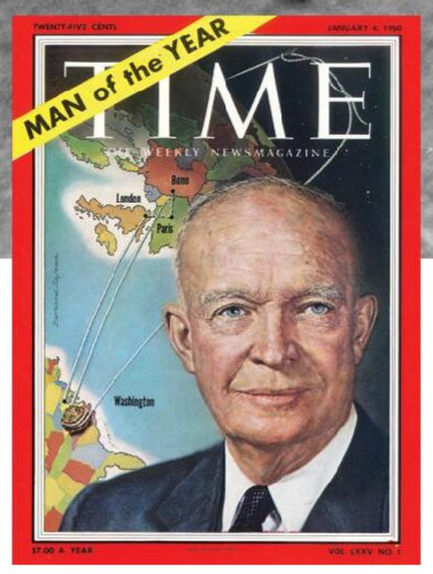
Left: *Truman at his desk in the Oval Office in 1945.*

MEANWHILE IN 1945...

April Adolf Hitler dies by suicide in his bunker. **October** Elvis Presley makes his first public appearance at age 10. **October** The United Nations Charter goes into effect with an initial 51 members.

MEANWHILE IN 1948...

January Mahatma Gandhi is murdered by an assassin in New Delhi, India. **April** The World Health Organization is established. **November** The first self-developing Polaroid Land Camera is sold in Boston.



1944 | 1959 *SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER IN EUROPE & 34TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES*

Dwight D. Eisenhower

GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER WAS THE Supreme Allied Commander in Europe on June 6, 1944, also known as D-Day. It was he who led the land, air, and sea forces onto the beaches of Normandy with the intent to squelch the Germans once and for all. The invasion was a huge risk, for sure, but Allied leaders had the greatest of confidence in Eisenhower. Many thought that the Allied victory would come by the summer's end, so when the battles raged on through the close of 1944, some questioned whether the struggle was all for naught.

Not Eisenhower, at least on the surface. In January 1945, TIME observed, "Even in times of crisis, he is relaxed, genial and confident on the surface—whatever goes on underneath." Eisenhower refused to admit the battle was lost while it was still being fought. Loss was not fathomable—the future of the postwar world was dependent on it. They were breaking Hitler, and Eisenhower knew it. But the bloodshed was taking its toll, and morale waned. In December 1944, as winter raged, he told his troops, "He [Hitler] is gambling everything, but already in this battle your gallantry has done much to foil his plans. In the face of your proven bravery and fortitude, he will completely fail."

And he was right.

Eisenhower would go on to become president in 1953. He was well into his second term when he was chosen as Person of the Year for the second time in 1959. This time, the selection was for spreading hope, both at home and around the world.

In 1959, Eisenhower arranged Nikita Khrushchev's historic state visit to the United States. It was the first time a Soviet leader made the trip, and it went a long way to ease the tensions of the Cold War. The two leaders spent three days at Camp David, giving Eisenhower a close-up view of Khrushchev, whom he concluded would be open to more discussions about nuclear disarmament.

During the last two years of his presidency, Eisenhower logged nearly 300,000 miles traveling across the world, including Europe, Asia, and Africa, meeting with dignitaries and speaking to huge crowds. According to TIME, his messages during his travels "breathed the hope that economic gain could be achieved in peace—and enjoyed outside political bondage."

On some of these trips, Eisenhower shared his view for a more prosperous future. In Paris, he spoke of the hope he had for his grandchildren and future great-grandchildren: "I am very concerned that they get a chance to live a better life than I had." Eisenhower gave people across the globe a new reason to believe that tomorrow's world did indeed have that chance.

Although hopes for Soviet-American relations were high after Camp David in 1959, in May of 1960, a U.S. spy plane was shot down in the Soviet Union just two weeks before another summit between the leaders was scheduled to occur in Paris. Khrushchev cancelled the meeting.

Eisenhower is remembered as a president who believed in a balanced budget and refused to employ deficit spending to revive the economy. In his farewell address in January 1961, he famously warned of the dangers of the "military-industrial complex," which he believed promoted policies that weren't in the country's best interests. During his two terms, he ended the Korean War in 1953, signed significant civil rights legislation in 1957 and in 1960, and ordered federal troops to enforce school desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Eisenhower was the first president to be limited to two terms by the Constitution's 22nd Amendment.

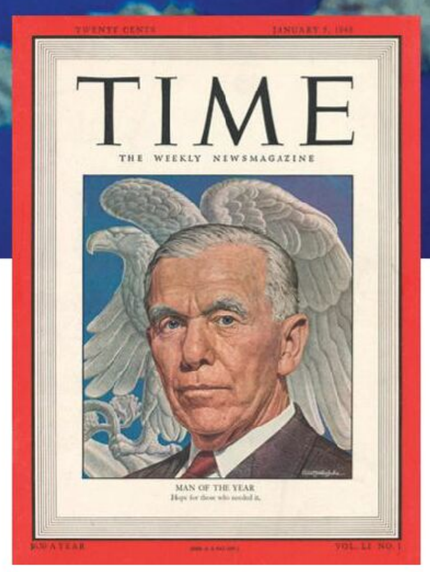
Left: *General Eisenhower commands troops in England in 1944.*

MEANWHILE IN 1944...

February The Republic of Iceland is formed. **November** FDR is elected U.S. president for the fourth time. **December** The Battle of the Bulge begins in the Ardennes region.

MEANWHILE IN 1959...

February Fidel Castro becomes prime minister of Cuba. **June** The St. Lawrence Seaway opens, linking the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. **August** Hawaii becomes the 50th U.S. state.



1943 | 1947 *CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE U.S. ARMY & 50TH U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE*

George C. Marshall

WHEN GERMANY INVADED POLAND IN 1939, General George C. Marshall began his work organizing the largest military expansion in U.S. history. He increased the number of soldiers, established a training program, invested in and around air power, and procured modern equipment, all while staving off hastily planned and ill-advised military operations. He knew that if the U.S. entered WWII, it needed an army that was big in numbers and well prepared. When the U.S. finally entered the war, he took command of the European invasion, and the Allies started to break the Axis.

According to TIME's January 1944 Person of the Year profile, Marshall's level-headed service and commitment to morale earned him respect back home and around the world: "To the millions of citizen soldiers, confidence in their technical leadership means morale. As a civilian in uniform, who wants to go home as soon as possible, the U.S. soldier wants to be sure that the ugly job he must do is competently handled. Under General Marshall, he knows it is; and this is why the U.S. soldier, in action, has proved utterly dependable and determined—the ultimate test of morale. … [Marshall was] at year's end the closest thing to 'the indispensable man.'"

All of this from a man who is said to have hated war. But the fate of the world was at stake, and Marshall was the right person to tip the scales.

Marshall became the 50th U.S. Secretary of State in 1947, a time when the world was rebuilding and the U.S. was in a unique position to solidify its influence across Europe. WWII left Europe broke. Without U.S. aid, Western democracy would collapse. In June of that year, Marshall spoke about the urgent need to assist in the European recovery, introducing what would later be known as the Marshall Plan. The plan proposed billions of U.S. dollars to aid in the economic recovery of Western nations and secure U.S. geopolitical influence. His skill at maintaining bipartisan foreign policy at home helped him lead the U.S. into its new world role. As expected, Russia was not happy. President Truman signed the Marshall Plan in April 1948, and it was in effect for four years.

Marshall resigned from his position as Secretary of State in 1949 due to health issues, but Truman brought him back as Secretary of Defense in 1950 to help prepare the U.S. armed forces for the Korean War, which Truman anticipated would be a short one. Marshall was already 70 years old, and served just one year before retiring.

In 1953, President Eisenhower appointed Marshall to the American delegation for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. When he entered Westminster Abbey for the ceremony, the congregation stood in his honor. Later the same year, Marshall received the Nobel Peace Prize "for proposing and supervising the plan for the economic recovery of Europe."

When Marshall was offered $1 million to write his autobiography, he stiffly replied: "The government of the United States has already paid me for my services." Three years before he died in 1959, he agreed to tell his story for nothing. On the condition that his biography would not be published during his lifetime, Marshall gave 52 hours of interviews to a nonprofit foundation created for the sole purpose of documenting his remarkable career. The result is a four-part series by Army historian Forrest Pogue.

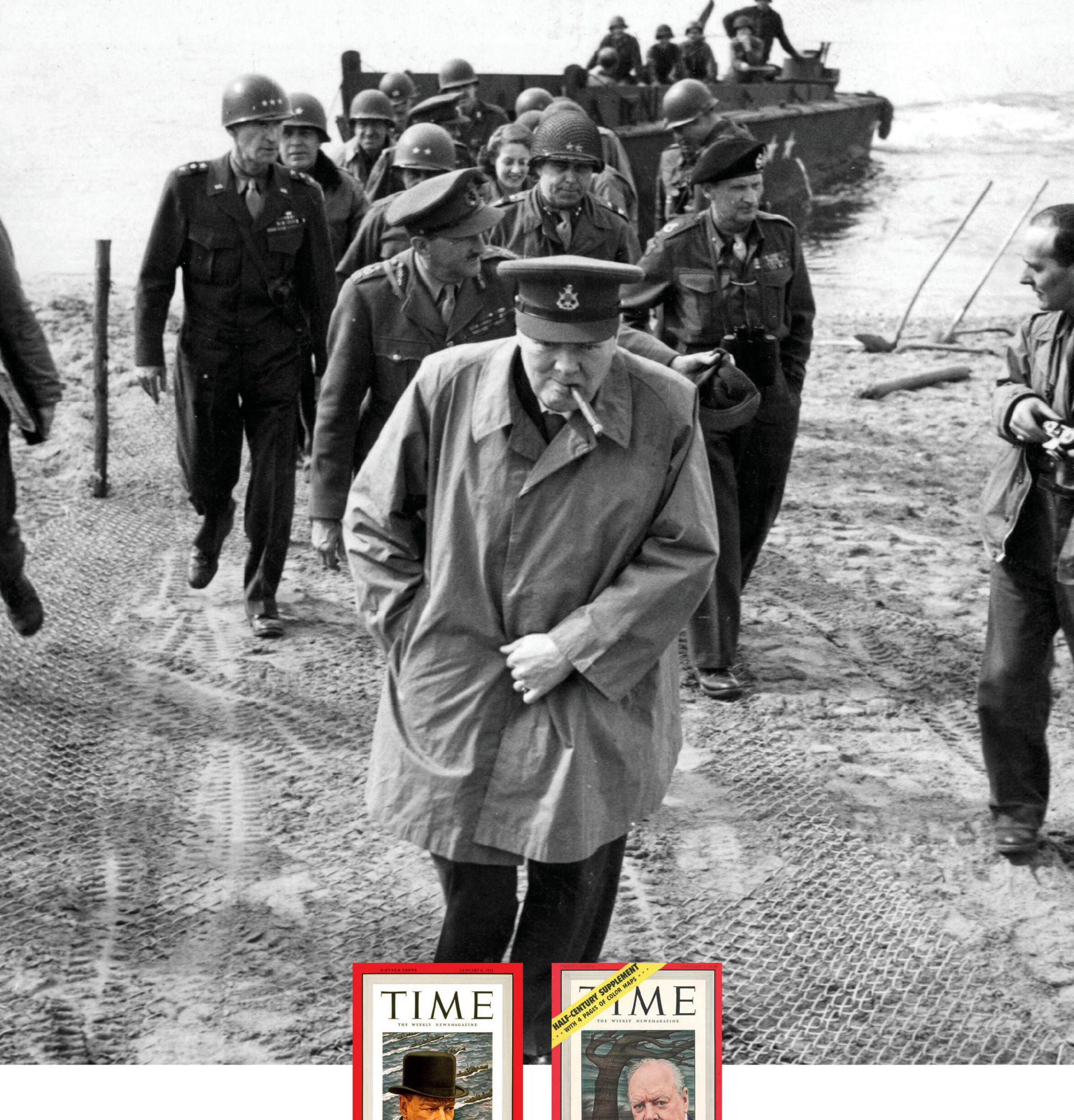
Left: *Marshall standing above a table map at his headquarters at the U.S. War Department in 1943.*

MEANWHILE IN 1943...

January The Pentagon building is dedicated in Washington, D.C. **February** The Germans surrender at Stalingrad, shifting the tide to the Allies. **September** The Allies invade mainland Italy at Salerno.

MEANWHILE IN 1947...

April Jackie Robinson breaks the Major League Baseball color barrier. **July** An alleged UFO crashes near Roswell, New Mexico. **August** India and Pakistan gain independence from Britain.



1940 | 1949 *PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM*

Winston Churchill

"December 31, 1940, was not only the end of a year; it was the end of a decade—the most terrifying of the 20th Century." —TIME, January 6, 1941

WHEN WINSTON CHURCHILL BECAME PRIME minister in May 1940, just as the Nazis descended within U.K. borders, he was the larger-than-life figure the country needed. The Nazis had conquered five nations that year, and their goal was to take Britain by the end of the summer. Under Churchill's leadership, it was not to be, but he had to rally to make it happen. In his first address to the House of Commons, he famously said, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat," and he asked the rest of the country to offer up the same.

Churchill went on to acknowledge the harsh reality the U.K. was in: "You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs. Victory in spite of all terrors." However long and hard the road to victory might be, it was the only option. Without victory there would be no survival.

Both Hitler and Churchill knew words can be used as mechanisms of warfare. Hitler used his as poison. Churchill used his as instruments to inspire his people during the bleakest of times, and he prevailed.

"All the greatest things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom; justice; honour; duty; mercy; hope."—Winston Churchill, at the 1947 United Europe Meeting in London

The first time Churchill was named TIME Person of the Year, he had been involved in politics in one way or another for 40 years. Nine years later, he was named TIME's Man of the Half Century after serving his country and the democratic world for nearly 50 years.

He was a gifted orator and writer, a leader who helped bring the Allies victory in WWII, and the British prime minister through tough times. Churchill steadfastly defended democracy against the spread of fascism, and free nations still reap the rewards today. He did dig in to Imperialist beliefs, and some of his wartime actions and indulgent behaviors are seen as flaws today, but even his critics cannot ignore the impact he had on the 20th century.

On January 2, 1950, TIME reported, "Churchill was getting ready for his 13th British general election. He would fight it—as he had fought all his other great battles—on the issue of freedom. Churchill likes freedom. He has been with freedom on some of its darkest and brightest days."

The Conservatives won the October 1951 election, and Churchill was again prime minister at age 77. King George VI died the following February, and Churchill became close to George VI's successor, the young Queen Elizabeth II. Churchill's health was declining, however, and in the summer of 1953, he suffered a stroke and spent the season recuperating. Behind the scenes, the day-to-day work of government was largely carried out by Churchill's close aides. He returned to office in the fall, but he was still in poor health. He left office in 1955 and died in 1965.

In 1953, Churchill was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature "for his mastery of historical and biographical description as well as for brilliant oratory in defending exalted human values."

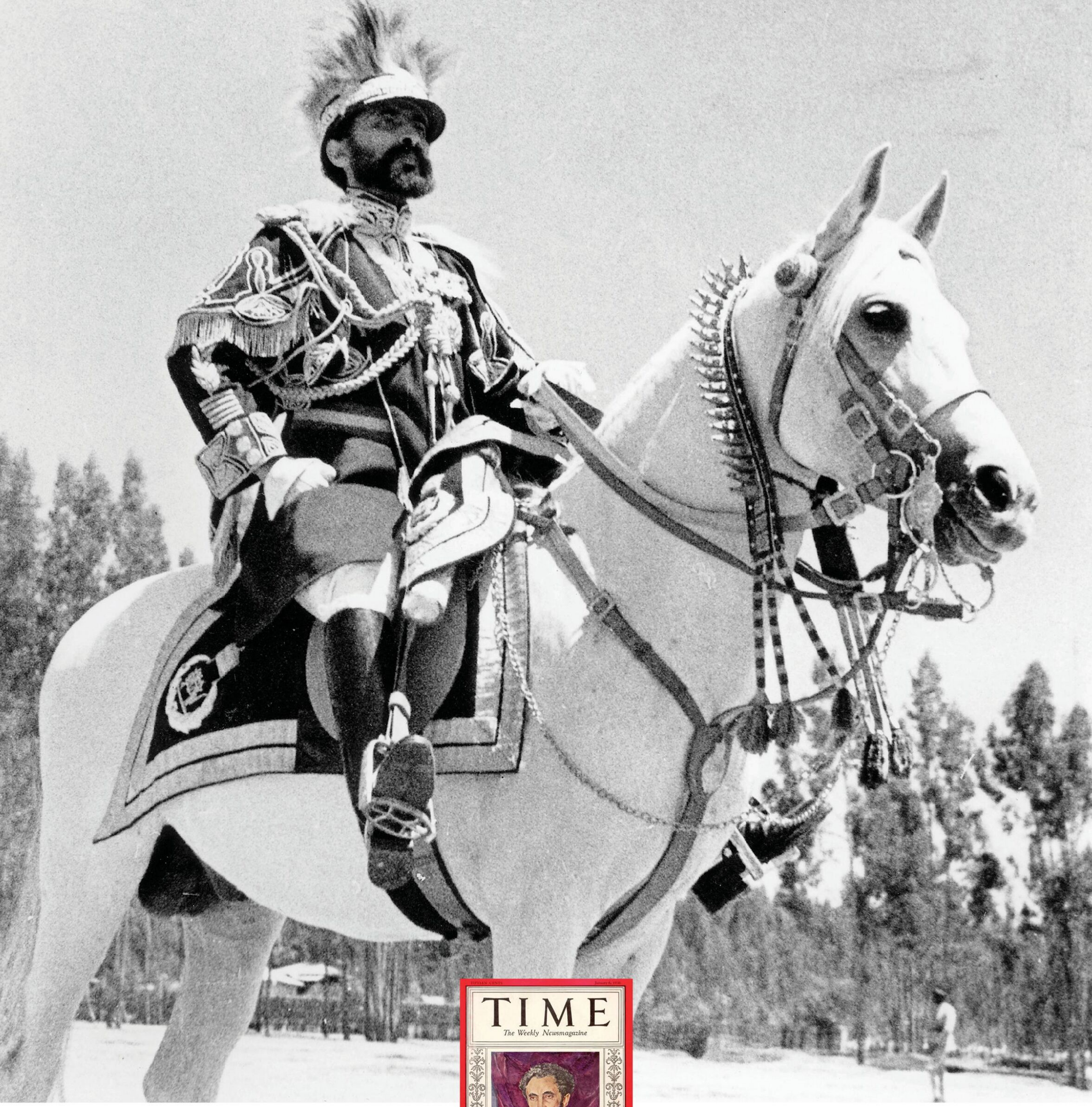
Left: *Churchill and a group of senior Allied officers on the banks of the Rhine River in 1945.*

MEANWHILE IN 1940...

May Germany invades the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. **May** Nylon stockings go on sale to the public after making their debut at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. **November** FDR wins the U.S. presidential election and embarks on an unprecedented third term.

MEANWHILE IN 1949...

April The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is established. **June** George Orwell's novel *1984* is released. **August** The Fourth Geneva Convention reaches an agreement.



1935 *EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA*

Haile Selassie

FRAIL AND PRONE TO BOUTS OF ILLNESS, HAILE Selassie was not an archetypal pillar of strength, but he fought European colonialism and fascism on behalf of Ethiopia with everything he had. When Italian forces invaded his homeland in 1935, the developing nation didn't really stand a chance, but that didn't mean the emperor had to take it lying down.

Selassie acted more like a businessman than a military general: He secured some support and was willing to make concessions in exchange for peace and to preserve his country's identity, which, TIME editors agreed, made him worthy of Person of the Year. Mighty Mussolini and the Italians were going to have their way, though; Selassie was ultimately deposed in 1936. He would return to power in 1941, but that's another story.

During his reign, Selassie demanded all the adulation due absolute power; no one was allowed to approach him without bowing three times and job-seekers were obliged to prostrate themselves before him.

The emperor was a founding father of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 and established its headquarters in his capital. At home, though, Selassie seemed concerned mostly with the trappings of progress—inspecting new roads and interviewing youths up for scholarships abroad. But he did little to initiate changes that might have raised Ethiopia from its position as one of Africa's poorest, least literate, and most corrupt nations. His failure to act on economic and social problems triggered the military protests in 1973 and led to him being deposed by Mengistu Haile Mariam's Derg regime in 1974.

But Selassie, for all his failings, acted as a glue binding together Ethiopia's disparate parts. Without him, the country would have been increasingly difficult to govern. He managed to stave off the looming struggle between military and civilian forces in the country for a time, but not irrevocably.

Some members of the Jamaican Rastafari movement, which began in the 1930s at the start of Selassie's reign, considered him a savior to redeem all Black people.

Selassie died while under house arrest in 1975 at age 83. His passing was originally attributed to natural causes, but there was great speculation surrounding it. Selassie's remains were found under a concrete slab on the grounds of his former palace in 1992, and he was formally laid to rest with much fanfare in 2000.

Many of his supporters long believed that Selassie was murdered by the Derg regime, which was overthrown in 1991. Mengistu and other Derg members fled to Zimbabwe, where they were granted asylum. In 1994, Mengistu and dozens of Derg officials were accused of killing thousands of people including Selassie, members of the royal family, ministers, and other top leaders. The trial lasted 12 years. Eventually, Mengistu and 71 Derg officials were convicted of a variety of charges, including genocide, imprisonment, homicide, and illegal confiscation of property. Unfortunately, Mengistu and some others evaded justice when Zimbabwe officials declined to extradite them. As of 2024, Mengistu is still living in Zimbabwe.

TIME included Selassie on its "Top 25 Political Icons" list in 2011.

Left: *Selassie participating in a 1934 parade.*

MEANWHILE IN 1935...

April The catastrophic Black Sunday dust storm sweeps across the Great Plains. **May** The Hoover Dam project is completed. **May** Babe Ruth hits the final home run of his career—his 714th.

1932 | 1934 | 1941 *32ND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES*

Franklin D. Roosevelt

TIME NAMED FDR PERSON OF THE YEAR THREE times, more any other U.S. President. The first time was for 1932, the year the governor of New York defeated Herbert Hoover by a landslide and became the 32nd U.S. president.

In 1932, America was still deep in the throes of the Great Depression, and poor, hungry voters desperately sought a beacon of strength and hope. Despite his physical limitations caused by a bout with polio, FDR promised both. His campaign focused on his vision of a New Deal that called for the vigorous creation of government programs to produce relief, recovery, and reform. America listened. FDR helped Americans start to rebuild faith in themselves, famously asserting, "the only thing we have to fear is…fear itself" during his March 1933 inaugural address that was broadcast via radio into the homes of eager listeners.

Urgent action was needed, and FDR delivered. During his first 100 days in office, he proposed, and Congress enacted, a sweeping program to bring recovery to business and agriculture and relief to the unemployed and those in danger of losing their farms and homes. And Average Joes could finally enjoy a beer—FDR passed the Cullen-Harrison Act in 1933, which allowed the sale of low-alcohol beverages for the first time since 1920.

FDR's second Person of the Year distinction was in 1934. His New Deal was in full swing, and he was seen, worldwide, as a doer of great things. While the ultimate fate of his policies had yet to play out, most U.S. citizens saw some positive changes in their day-to-day lives. As he said in May 1934 in his address at Gettysburg, "We are all brothers now, brothers in a new understanding."

Consequently, in the 1934 November midterm, Democrats gained seats in both the House and the Senate, a rare example of an incumbent party win in the post-Civil War era. The people loved FDR; he was a master in the art of politics.

FDR's third turn as Person of the Year came after he used his influence to unify the nation through the despair of the Great Depression, and he was uniquely poised to spread hope across the war-torn, panic-ridden world. In his acceptance speech at the 1936 Democratic Convention, he prophesized, "This generation has a rendezvous with destiny." Under his leadership, the people of the United States would work with the world to ensure that destiny was a good one. The wheels would turn, and the good life would flourish.

At the close of 1940, FDR became the leader of the United States at war, which made him the leader of all democracies against Hitler. The future of democracy was at stake, and it was dependent on what the U.S. and FDR could give.

The U.S. had been reluctant to get involved in World War II—the U.S. had not been in a foreign war on the defensive in diplomacy, on land and at sea, since the War of 1812. But Japan's December 7, 1941, bombing at Pearl Harbor was a wake-up call for many. FDR used his influence to unify the country to contribute to the greater cause and become the deciding factor to end worldwide suffering.

Roosevelt died while in office in April 1945.

Left: *FDR celebrates his election victory in 1932.*

MEANWHILE IN 1932...

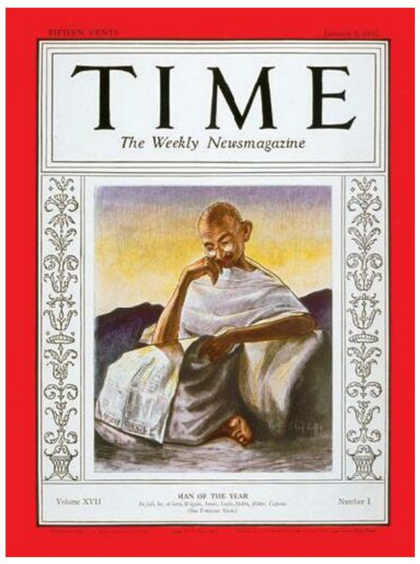
January The Great Depression stretches on. Almost 25% of the U.S. workforce is unemployed. **May** Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to complete a nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. **November** The first sci-fi radio show, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, debuts on CBS.

MEANWHILE IN 1934...

April London's *Daily Mail* publishes a photo of what was allegedly the Loch Ness Monster. **June** Donald Duck makes his first appearance in *The Wise Little Hen*. **July** Notorious gangster John Dillinger is killed by U.S. special agents.

MEANWHILE IN 1941...

March FDR signs the Lend-Lease Act to provide military aid to the Allies. **May** The classic film *Citizen Kane* is released. **July** The big band tune "Chattanooga Choo Choo" is released.



1930 *INDIAN REVOLUTIONARY*

Mahatma Gandhi

MAHATMA GANDHI'S NONVIOLENT CRUSADE against British colonialism landed him in South African and Indian prisons many times during his life, but his arrest on May 5, 1930, was the one that prompted TIME to name him Person of the Year.

In March 1930, Gandhi launched a *satyagraha* (passive political resistance movement) against the British salt monopoly and subsequent taxes, and he wrote a letter to the viceroy of India condemning British rule. Then, along with 78 volunteers, he marched to the salt mines of Dandi to mine salt himself, a violation of law. During the 240-mile, 25-day journey, Gandhi stopped to speak to large crowds that gathered along the route. When he arrived in Dandi, thousands gathered in support. He was eventually arrested and imprisoned without trial on May 5, but his followers kept on protesting. On May 11, while Gandhi sat in prison, the marchers were attacked by policemen—hundreds were seriously injured and many were killed. During the hours of violent attacks, none of his followers raised a hand in self-defense. Despite Gandhi's absence at the end, the Salt March is considered one of his greatest achievements in upsetting Britain's colonial rule in India.

Despite Britain's attempts to isolate him from his followers, Gandhi's influence grew and could not be ignored. He was eventually released in January 1931, and the Crown began to make concessions to India and its other colonial subjects across the globe, albeit little by little.

When WWII broke out, India's struggle with Great Britain hit a crucial phase. As a pacifist, Gandhi was opposed to war, but he also opposed Nazism. However, he didn't see the point in supporting a war to protect democratic freedoms since his own country was not free. He urged his people not to cooperate with imperial government, but do it peacefully. In 1942, he called for India's independence and demanded that the British immediately withdraw from the country, which was known as the Quit India Movement. Although the British were preoccupied with the war at the time, they acted swiftly and arrested Gandhi, then in his 70s, and most of the Indian National Congress.

As word of the arrest spread, so did the unrest. The British Raj responded by tightening its already strict control. Gandhi was accused—with the help of documents that had been seized from the Congress party headquarters—of supporting the Japanese in the war, while his supporters claimed that those documents had been "misinterpreted."

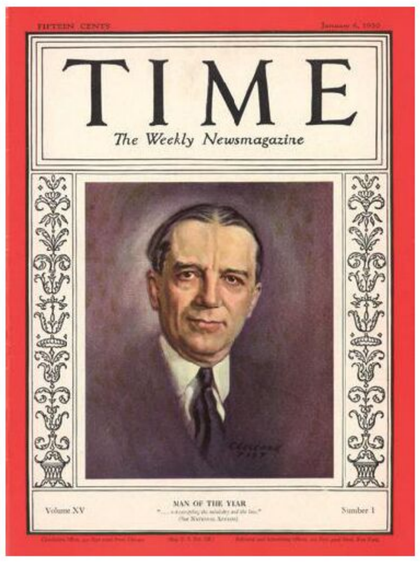
Meanwhile, the rest of the world—particularly the U.S., at that moment an important ally of the U.K. but also naturally predisposed to support colonial rebellion against that ally—watched warily. (Gandhi was released in 1944, from what would be his last stint in prison. Britain left India in 1947, and Gandhi died in 1948.) Decades later, however, when Gandhi was included in TIME's "Person of the Century" issue, the magazine noted that the world did eventually take the Mahatma's side.

"It may be that this most Indian of leaders, revered as *Bapu*, or Father of the Nation, means more now to the world at large," the story noted. "Foreigners don't have to wrestle with the confusion Indians feel today as they judge whether their nation has kept faith with his vision. For the rest of us, his image offers something much simpler—a shining set of ideals to emulate. Individual freedom. Political liberty. Social justice. Nonviolent protest. Passive resistance. Religious tolerance. His work and his spirit awakened the 20th century to ideas that serve as a moral beacon for all epochs." *—with Lily Rothman*

Left: *Gandhi addressing the press in Marseille in 1930.*

MEANWHILE IN 1930...

January The Great Depression is taking root; 4 million Americans are out of work. **February** Astronomer Clyde W. Tombaugh discovers Pluto at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. **August** Betty Boop appears for the first time in the cartoon *Dizzy Dishes.*



1929 *CHAIRMAN OF THE SECOND REPARATIONS CONFERENCE*

Owen D. Young

IN 1924, OWEN D. YOUNG SERVED ON THE committee of international finance experts that penned the Dawes Plan, which outlined, among other things, a staggered payment arrangement for Germany's reparations for actions in WWI. A few years later, however, it became clear that German leaders were not willing to stick to the terms of the plan. The Allied Reparations Committee appointed a new crew to convene in Paris in early 1929, and selected Young as its chair.

Young was a reluctant participant, but as an appointee of President Herbert Hoover, he did his civic duty. On paper, he was undoubtedly qualified: At the time of his appointment, he was chairman of the board of General Electric and the Radio Corporation of America, and he served on the Rockefeller Foundation board of trustees. But Young's financial know-how wasn't the only asset he used to steer the diverse committee members to agreement. The five-month conference was grueling, and Young led with subtle, yet disciplined tact that inspired the mix of personalities to trust him and each other. In the words of delegate Keingo Mori of Japan, "I could not have conceived, unless I had seen it, of an American having such patience."

The Young Plan was written in August of 1929 and formally adopted in 1930. Unfortunately, fallout from the Great Depression caused the plan to crumble, and by mid-1933, all European debtor nations except Finland had defaulted. Never one to be as flashy as some of his wealthy industrialist counterparts, Young was active in education causes throughout his life and retired to a dairy farm in rural New York.

Left: *Young sits stoically for a portrait in 1927.*

MEANWHILE IN 1929...

March President Herbert Hoover takes office as the 31st U.S. President. **September** The Great Wall Street Crash of 1929 begins. **November** The first round-trip flight to the South Pole is completed.

1928 *BUSINESSPERSON*

Walter Chrysler

IN 1928, TIME DESCRIBED THE QUICK RISE OF Walter Chrysler: "…twelve months of extraordinary activity. From motor man with one product, he had become one of the chief U.S. industrialists. Undeniably, he had been the outstanding businessman of the year." That year, as the founder and first president of the Chrysler Corp., he brought the Plymouth automobile to market, acquired the Dodge Motor Co., and introduced a new line of affordable commercial cars, cementing his company as an auto-producing giant.

The same year, he announced his plans to build the Chrysler Building, a 1,046-foot Art Deco skyscraper that stood as the world's tallest building for 11 months. Of this epic endeavor, he simply said, "I like to build things. I like to do things. I am having a lot of fun going thoroughly into everything with the architect."

Chrysler grew up in humble Ellis, Kansas, the son of a locomotive engineer. He started his career as a grocery-store chore boy, and at 17 landed an apprenticeship at a Union Pacific shop. From that point on, mechanical engineering became his life. After a year or so, he made his own steam engine; shortly after, he wanted a shotgun, so he made that too. His successful career that followed was fueled by his intense curiosity, practical business sense, and eyes fixed firmly on the future.

Chrysler married his childhood sweetheart, Della Viola Forker, with whom he had four children. She stood beside him until her death in 1938; he died in 1940 at his home in New York. He was 65.

Right: *Walter Chrysler in 1930.*

MEANWHILE IN 1928...

April The Yo-yo Manufacturing Company opens in Santa Barbara, California. **September** Alexander Fleming discovers the life-saving drug penicillin in his laboratory. **November** Mickey Mouse makes his debut in the animated short film *Steamboat Willie.*

2020 *U.S PRESIDENT-ELECT & VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT*

Joe Biden & Kamala Harris

IN 2020, U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JOE Biden and his running mate, Kamala Harris, managed to knock off an incumbent president for just the 10th time in American history. The Biden-Harris ticket beat the Trump-Pence team by 7 million votes.

The heated campaign polarized the country, and it was the first of its kind. COVID-19 was ripping across the world, so Biden could not connect with everyday people or his staff in the traditional ways. This made Biden's choice of running mate more important than just balancing the ticket—he needed someone who represented a diverse America. He found it in U.S. Senator and former Attorney General of California Kamala Harris, the daughter of an Indian-born mother and Jamaican-born father. Harris was charismatic, competent, and more than 20 years younger than Biden.

Together, the two set out to convince disenchanted voters that America could be renewed. The fallout of COVID-19 caused an education and economic crisis. Global warming was on the rise. And Biden and Harris were up against a formidable incumbent opponent.

On Election Day, 81 million voters expressed their vision of the country's future. It was the highest turnout in a century. Said Biden, "I predict we will come out of this crisis stronger than when we went in."

One of the Biden-Harris administration's biggest initiatives was passing the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in August 2022. It came about in a windy legislative process that began with a big campaign promise from Biden and ended with backroom deal-making on Capitol Hill. All Senate and House Democrats voted for it, and all Republicans voted against it. The law aims to reduce the federal government budget deficit, lower prescription drug prices, and invest funds into domestic energy production while promoting clean energy.

Although inflation has gone down since the IRA was passed, many economists do not credit the law for the decrease. However, other parts of the law have brought some positive changes. A January 2024 press release from the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging touted the fact that the IRA capped the price of insulin for Medicare Part D beneficiaries at $35 a month for certain covered insulin products and will limit Medicare beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs at $2,000 per year beginning in 2025. It also instituted a new provision to impose penalties on drug companies that hike up prices in Medicare above the rate of inflation. In August 2023, a year after the IRA became law, TIME reported that companies have invested more than $270 billion in U.S.-based clean energy projects—think wind, solar, and battery—according to a report from the American Clean Power Association.

In July 2024, President Biden, 81, decided to drop out of the 2024 presidential race after a disastrous debate performance against former president Donald Trump a month prior. In a historic address from the Oval Office, he passed the torch to Vice President Harris, declaring it is time for a new generation of leadership in America. "There's a time and a place for long years of experience in public life," he said. "There's also a time and a place for new voices, fresh voices, yes, younger voices. And that time and place is now."

Right: *Biden and Harris, wearing masks, arrive to campaign in Delaware in 2020, during the heart of the pandemic.*

MEANWHILE IN 2020...

January Basketball legend Kobe Bryant and eight others, including his daughter, die in a helicopter crash. **February** Antarctica's temperature reaches 64.7°F, the highest on record. **May** George Floyd, a Black man, is killed by a Minneapolis police officer who kneeled on his neck for 9½ minutes.

2018 *BRAVE TRUTH-TELLERS*

The Guardians

IN A TIME WHEN MISINFORMATION RAN RAMPANT and the U.S. president steadily attacked the press with claims of "fake news," TIME put the spotlight on courageous journalists around the world who faced persecution, arrest, or murder for their reporting.

TIME published four covers highlighting these truth-tellers:

Jamal Khashoggi, *Washington Post* columnist, who was murdered for his criticism of the Saudi crown prince.

Maria Ressa, editor of the Philippines news website Rappler, who was indicted for her critical coverage of Rodrigo Duterte's violent policies.

Wa Lone *and* ***Kyaw Soe Oo***, Reuters journalists, who were captured in Myanmar while investigating the Inn Din massacre.

The staff of **The Capital Gazette**, a Maryland newspaper whose office was targeted by a gunman who killed five of its employees in a mass shooting.

The feature also honored the following:

Shahidul Alam of Bangladesh, who was imprisoned
Arkady Babchenko of Russia, who was threatened
Can Dündar of Turkey, who was exiled
Tatyana Felgenhauer of Russia, who was persecuted
Amal Habani of Sudan, who was beaten
Dulcina Parra of Mexico, who was kidnapped
Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh of Vietnam, who was imprisoned
Luz Mely Reyes of Venezuela, who was persecuted

Jamal Khashoggi was the first person TIME named a Person of the Year who was no longer alive. Directed by a killer whose motive was "control of information," as Khashoggi's fellow *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius noted, the murder prompted a global reexamination of Saudi Arabia's crown prince, who a CIA assessment concluded likely ordered the killing. In 2019, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report holding the State of Saudi Arabia responsible for Khashoggi's murder. There were trials in Saudi Arabia and indictments in Turkey, but little was done to punish those responsible.

The January 2018 claims that Maria Ressa and Rappler committed cyber libel in the Philippines by correcting a typo in an older story led in her arrest in 2019. She was convicted in 2020, and could face six years in prison and thousands of dollars in fines—as of June 2024, charges in the case are on hold or in appeals. The Philippines' Security and Exchange Commission also called for Rappler to be shut down, claiming it violated foreign ownership rules. In 2022, the ruling was upheld. It is now on appeal. In November 2018, Ressa and Rappler were brought to court on tax evasion charges. The Philippines' Bureau of Internal Revenue ruled that Rappler had evaded $133 million in taxes. In January and September of 2023, Ressa and Rappler were acquitted of the tax charges on appeal.

Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were convicted under the Official Secrets Act in Myanmar and sentenced to seven years in prison, prompting outrage about freedom of the press and democracy in the country. In 2019, they were released under presidential amnesty after serving more than 500 days of their sentences.

In 2019, Jarrod W. Ramos, who shot and killed staffers at *The Capital* after harassing them for years over a story they published about him in 2011, pleaded guilty to 23 charges, including five counts of first-degree murder, but his lawyers argued that he was not responsible by reason of insanity. In 2023, a jury found that Ramos was sane at the time of the shootings, and he was sentenced to life in prison.

In the five years since the shootings, the situation for reporters around the world hasn't improved much. According to Reporters Without Borders, in 2018, the environment was rated "good" or "satisfactory" in 26.1% of the 180 countries and territories evaluated, "problematic" in 35%, "difficult" in 26.7%, and "very serious" in 12.2%. In 2023, ratings were 28.8% "good" or "satisfactory" and "very serious" in 17.2%.

MEANWHILE IN 2018...

May Film producer Harvey Weinstein is charged with rape in New York. **May** Prince Harry marries American actor Meghan Markle at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. **October** President Trump appoints controversial candidate Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court.

2017 *#METOO DISRUPTERS*

The Silence Breakers

#METOO WAS STARTED TO EMPOWER SEXUALLY assaulted people (especially young and vulnerable women of color) through empathy and solidarity. It encouraged victims to speak out about their experiences, call attention to the issue, and form strength in numbers. TIME's cover features strawberry picker Isabel Pascual (a pseudonym), lobbyist Adama Iwu, actor Ashley Judd, software engineer Susan Fowler, singer-songwriter Taylor Swift, and a hospital worker who wished to remain anonymous.

In addition to the cover subjects, the 2017 Person of the Year story spotlights the following women:
Bex Bailey, charity worker
Selma Blair, actor
Tarana Burke, activist
Jessica Cantlon, professor
Terry Crews, actor
Sara Gelser, politician
Blaise Godbe Lipman, filmmaker
Megyn Kelly, journalist
Celeste Kidd, professor
Rose McGowan, actor
Juana Melara, housekeeper
Jane Merrick, journalist
Lindsay Meyer, entrepreneur
Alyssa Milano, actor
Sandra Muller, journalist
Zelda Perkins, producer
Sandra Pezqueda, dishwasher
Terry Reintke, European Parliament member
Lindsey Reynolds, blogger
Amanda Schmitt, charity worker
Wendy Walsh, psychotherapist and writer

The story also features an anonymous former office assistant and the seven plaintiffs who sued New York's Plaza Hotel.

#MeToo progress has been neither quick nor linear. Survivors and activists expressed indignation when Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh was confirmed in 2018 despite allegations of assault. Still, the ripples have not dissipated.

Although former Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein had his rape and sexual assault convictions in in New York overturned, Manhattan prosecutors vow to retry him, and he still faces a 16-year sentence in California, a signal to women that their stories can be believed and that even the most powerful men can face consequences. Using the name coined by TIME in the 2017 Person of the Year issue, a group of Weinstein accusers now call themselves the Silence Breakers. "What I wanted to do was cause a massive cultural reset," Rose McGowan, one of the accusers, said on the day of the New York verdict. "We achieved that today."

TARANA BURKE, WHO FOUNDED THE #METOO movement in 2006, told TIME in 2019 that as the movement evolves, it's important to talk about holding decent men accountable when they act inappropriately, even if they are perceived to be an "ally" in other areas. "What I realized in the last year is that people are OK when you're talking about the big, scary bad guy," she said, rattling off the names of "big boogymen" public figures who have been accused of sexual misconduct, including Harvey Weinstein and R. Kelly.

"But when we start talking about…the good guy who's an ally to women, who looks out for everybody, who's a stand-up person, but maybe behaves in a way that is too permissive, then it's a problem," Burke added. "The reality is if we want to really look toward ending sexual violence, we have to examine all of our behavior."

Victims' advocates and legal experts say the #MeToo movement has fueled cultural change, putting pressure on prosecutors to take action and creating public support for the sexual misconduct cases they pursue. In 2019, TIME reported that #MeToo helped to bring new charges to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein after prosecutors had treated him leniently in the past.

"While the charged conduct is from a number of years ago, it is still profoundly important to the many alleged

NO
MEANS

#WOMENSCONVENTION
#RECLAIMINGOURTIME

victims, now young women," Geoffrey Berman, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, said at a press conference announcing the Epstein charges in 2019. "They deserve their day in court, and we are proud to be standing up for them by bringing this indictment."

"It's not that the girls didn't come forward years ago. The victims did come forward years ago," Jane Manning, a former New York City sex crimes prosecutor who is now an attorney for rape survivors, told TIME.

"Historically, our criminal justice system has been too quick to let sexual predators go without consequences, and that willingness is multiplied many times for powerful, privileged predators like Epstein," Manning said. "What's making a difference now is the brave survivors who have spoken out as part of the #MeToo movement and the advocates and journalists who have stood with them."

The Epstein case echoes several other examples of years-old sex-abuse claims against high-profile, powerful men being revisited in the wake of the #MeToo movement, resulting in fresh criminal charges. One reason is that the movement has encouraged more women to speak out, raising the public's understanding about sexual assault, and creating more of an incentive for prosecutors to pursue cases that would otherwise seem risky or untenable.

"Given that there might be more of a public openness to holding people of power accountable for sexual assault, it's possible that [federal prosecutors in New York] said, 'We're going to seize this moment to bring these charges,'" said Margo Kaplan, a Rutgers Law School professor who teaches courses on criminal law and sex crimes. "This is probably a better time to bring a case than in 2007 or 2008, given that there are more men being held to accountability."

Meanwhile, Epstein was far from the only person whose alleged crimes have been reexamined in the past few years.

In what was seen as the first major sexual assault trial of the #MeToo era, a jury found comedian Bill Cosby guilty of sexual assault in 2018 based on accusations that he drugged and assaulted a woman in his home in 2004. Cosby's conviction was later overturned. In 2022, he was found liable in a civil suit for sexually assaulting another woman and ordered to pay $500,000.

In 2019—following nearly two decades of sexual misconduct claims—R. Kelly was indicted on charges of aggravated criminal sexual abuse against four victims, including three underage girls, in events said to have taken place from 1998 to 2010. Also in 2019, he was charged with 11 additional counts of sexual assault and abuse related to that case. He was eventually convicted of racketeering violating the Mann Act (human trafficking), and for producing child pornography. He is currently serving a 31-year prison sentence.

Kelly's charges came after the premiere of the high-profile documentary, *Surviving R. Kelly,* that featured many alleged victims. However, reporters had documented allegations of Kelly's misconduct for almost two decades.

Weinstein, Epstein, and Kelly had emerged largely unscathed from previous charges or criminal investigations before the rise of the #MeToo movement. Kelly was acquitted of 14 counts of child pornography in 2008. Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. decided not to pursue sexual abuse charges against Weinstein in 2015, despite allegedly obtaining an audio tape in which Weinstein apologized to Italian model Ambra Battilana for touching her breasts. Vance said his office did not have enough evidence to build a winning case.

"There really is a wave of various high-profile individuals who were protected by the criminal justice system, among other institutions, who are now being examined and are being prosecuted," said Penny Venetis, a Rutgers Law School professor, who has advocated for child sex-trafficking victims, noting that prosecutors "certainly were aware of" claims made about Epstein in the past.

"Prosecutors will not indict someone and will not prosecute someone unless they think they have a really good case, and I think there might be a feeling that jurors are now more attuned to allegations of sexual abuse and sexual assault, and more willing to believe that this occurred, including by high-profile, rich, well-connected people."

Colby Bruno, senior legal counsel at the Victim Rights Law Center, told TIME in 2019 that prosecutors were likely motivated by the fact that members of the public and political leaders alike, started to pay more attention to sexual abuse allegations and call for justice.

"I think that now that we're turning our attention and investigating these cases in the appropriate way, we're uncovering evidence that is so shockingly consistent that we can't ignore it," Bruno said. "And I think that's what the MeToo movement did."

"You're getting this overarching support, not just ground support, and I think that helps," Bruno said. "And I think that once we had one victory—whether it was Weinstein or Cosby—once we had one victory, we understood that we could have more. You cannot underestimate that momentum."

#MeToo led to policy change too. According to the National Women's Law Center, by 2023, 25 states and the District of Columbia have passed a total of more than 80 workplace anti-harassment laws, many with bipartisan support. *—with Eliana Dockterman and Katie Reilly*

Page 69: *Professor Celeste Kidd in 2019.* ***Top Left:*** *A 2017 #MeToo rally in front of Trump International Hotel & Tower in New York.* ***Bottom Left:*** *Actor Rose McGowan speaks at the 2017 Women's Convention in Detroit.*

MEANWHILE IN 2017...

January The Women's March becomes the largest single-day protest in United States history. **March** The messaging service Snapchat starts trading publicly. **October** A shooter kills 60 people and wounds hundreds more at a music festival in Las Vegas.

2014 *SELFLESS LIFESAVERS*

The Ebola Fighters

UP UNTIL 2014, THE EBOLA VIRUS POPPED UP in rural African villages every few years. But in 2014, an outbreak turned into an epidemic, due, in part, to improvements in Africa's rural infrastructure that allowed people to move around more freely and spread the virus. To control the Ebola outbreak, many health-care workers had to risk their own lives.

These heroes were featured in the cover story:
Dr. Jerry Brown, medical director at the Eternal Love Winning Africa Hospital in Monrovia, Liberia: "I always had the fear of myself or one of my staff getting infected."
Dr. Kent Brantly, a physician with Samaritan's Purse and the first American to be infected in 2014: "Ebola is a humiliating disease that strips you of your dignity."
Ella Watson-Stryker, a health promoter for Doctors Without Borders who is originally from the United States: "Guinea broke my heart…There was one week that we went to nine funerals."
Foday Gallah, an ambulance supervisor and Ebola survivor from Monrovia, Liberia: "Fear was there, but it didn't overtake us."
Salome Karwah, a trainee nurse and counselor from Liberia whose parents died of Ebola: "I said, 'Sitting and crying won't help me. So it's better I go and work.'"
Pardis Sabeti, a scientist from the Broad Institute in Massachusetts, who concluded Ebola is transmitted from person to person instead of animal to person, as was previously believed.

But how did the Ebola outbreak get so bad? One big reason, according to a September 2014 article in TIME, was the response was too slow. It described how Tulane University virologist Robert Garry had visited a hospital in Sierra Leone that was treating some of his colleagues, including Dr. Sheik Humarr Khan—one of the first doctors to die of the disease there. Garry then warned various groups, including the U.S. State Department, that the outbreak was highly concerning. No one, he says, really listened to him. "Their response was cordial, but nothing really happened," said Garry. "I was really concerned about the lack of attention. I caught a lot of flack for saying I didn't think the numbers [of reported cases and deaths caused by Ebola] were accurate. Some of us realized this was not going to be controlled."

In a paper published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Peter Piot, director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and one of the original researchers to discover Ebola in 1976, wrote: "It was not until five months and 1,000 deaths later that a public health emergency was declared, and it was nearly another two months before a humanitarian response began to be put in place."

There was also a lack of training for cultural sensitivity on the part of the response workers, which led to misunderstandings. Patricia Omidian, a medical anthropologist, was sought by the World Health Organization (WHO) to spend time in Liberia to help the workers better understand the communities they were serving. Work included explaining some of the cultural practices among Liberians, including burial rituals that involve a lot of physical contact, putting mourners at risk of contracting the virus. "This disease attacks the best of [Liberians'] culture—that of touching and caring and kindness," she told TIME.

Although the WHO, the Centers for Disease Control, and the United Nations had the technology to do contact tracing and predict spreading, they did not have medical teams to deploy to the most needy areas. Dr. Jack Chow, professor of global health at Carnegie Mellon University and a former WHO assistant director general, noted the need for that to change. "In addition to building an international epidemic response force, we need to conceptualize 'global health defense' to include bolstering the health systems of the poorest countries," he said.

And although there were drugs developed to treat Ebola, they were not readily available. The drug ZMapp, for example, was given to a few health care workers, but the supply quickly dwindled—the medicine was made by a small company with only a few employees.

There was also the worldwide perception of Ebola being an "Africa" problem instead of concentrating on the specific countries where it was devastating and recognizing that other, untouched countries were still doing business as usual. "Ghana never had any cases, Burkina Faso never had any cases. … If you scare away investors by lumping the continent into one big mass, what good does it do? It will take another decade to recover," said former Nigerian Minister of Economy and Minister of Finance Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, who is now Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

The Ebola virus infected over 28,600 people in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea, and killed over 11,000 people. The WHO declared that the outbreak was over on January 14, 2016. —*with Alexandra Sifferlin*

Above: *Geneticist Pardis Sabeti working in a lab at the Broad Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 2008.*

MEANWHILE IN 2014...

February Matthew McConaughey wins an Oscar for his role as Ron Woodroof in *Dallas Buyers Club*. **March** Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappears while flying from Malaysia to China. **April** The Catholic Church canonizes Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II.

2011 *HISTORY CHANGERS*

The Protester

IN ITS 2011 PERSON OF THE YEAR STORY, TIME noted: "America's great 21st century contribution to fomenting freedom abroad was not imposing it militarily but enabling it technologically, as an epiphenomenon of globalization. And for a second act, globalization returned the favor, turning democratic uprisings in developing countries into inspirational exports for the rich world."

After years of economic decline, human rights violations, political corruption, unemployment, and poverty, young people worldwide banded together to say enough was enough. The relatively new connectedness social media provided helped grassroots groups to collectively organize more effectively than ever before.

In December 2010, a street vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire on a street in Tunisia in a fight against autocracy, and sparked the mass protests in the Middle East known as Arab Spring. In Egypt, the outcry was over a fraudulent election. In Spain, Greece, and India, millions flooded the streets to challenge greedy government dealings. In Israel, the grievance package was similar: good jobs too scarce, cost of living too high, politicians corrupt, and the rich getting richer.

In London, police shot and killed a young Black man they were arresting, inciting riots against police brutality, poverty, unemployment, and inequality. In Mexico, protesters lined the streets displaying photos of loved ones who were killed by drug-related violence. In Chile, students rallied for better education opportunities. In Russia, the outcry was for fair elections.

In the U.S., Occupy Wall Street demonstrators were fed up with the elite 1%. As TIME noted in the cover story, "In the Middle East and North Africa, in Spain and Greece and New York, social media and smart phones did not replace face-to-face social bonds and confrontation but helped enable and turbocharge them, allowing protesters to mobilize more nimbly and communicate with one another and the wider world more effectively than ever before. And in police states with high Internet penetration—Ben Ali's Tunisia, Mubarak's Egypt, Bashar Assad's Syria—a critical mass of cell-phone video recorders plus YouTube plus Facebook plus Twitter really did become an indigenous free press. Throughout the Middle East and North Africa, "new media" and "blogger" became quasi synonyms for protest and protester.

Fast-forward to May 25, 2020, when a Black man named George Floyd was murdered by a white police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nearly a decade after the Arab Spring, the power of social media to spur protest was once again reaffirmed. A young woman, Darnella Frazier, had filmed his death at the hand—and knee—of Minneapolis police officers the prior evening, and she shared the video on her Facebook page.

A day earlier, Melody Cooper had tweeted a video taken by her brother Christian Cooper, a Black birdwatcher out birding in New York City's Central Park, showing a white woman calling 911 and making a false claim that an African American man was threatening her life. Christian had asked the woman to put a leash on her dog. (Melody's video now has over 44 million views.)

And the day after Floyd's death, less than a mile away from where he was killed, Black entrepreneurs Abdi Hassan and Salman Elmi were confronted by a white man who accused them of trespassing in the gym of a building where they rent office space. Hassan and a colleague, Zak Ahmed, recorded the incident and shared two videos on Instagram, showing the man also threatening to call 911.

The footage reveals some of the many forms of racism that are part of daily life in America. The impact of these videos—along with several other clips showing racial discrimination, police brutality, and violence—helped give rise to Black Lives Matter.

The Black Lives Matter movement has sparked calls for accountability and justice, and it mobilized activists to push for change. Racial justice protests have taken place in thousands of cities around the world, with millions of people participating.

"Imagine if Martin Luther King Jr. had a Facebook," author and activist Kimberly Jones says of social media's

power, "and the way in which information could have been sent out… the opportunity to view and see things how they authentically were."

The protests in turn represent a movement that's both generations old in its presence and contemporary in its practices—the use of technology and social media platforms to amplify messaging and inform both media and cultural narratives. "More and more people in the United States, and around the world, are finally waking up to the fact that this has been the status quo in our communities," Black Lives Matter cofounder Opal Tometi told TIME. "And we need to stop it." *—with Erica Solano and Alexandra Robson*

Above: *Media photographers swarm a protester on the first day of Occupy Wall Street, September 17, 2011.*

MEANWHILE IN 2011...

March A magnitude 9.1 earthquake struck Japan, causing a tsunami and a nuclear disaster. **May** U.S. Navy Seals find and kill Osama bin Laden in Pakistan after a decade-long search. **September** The U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy is repealed.

2005 *STEWARDS ON A GLOBAL MISSION*

The Good Samaritans

IN 2005 THE WORLD'S POOR NEEDED PEOPLE to get interested, get mad, and then get to work. And that is what Bill Gates, Melinda French Gates, and Bono did. Their alliance was an unlikely one, but it worked—an engineer's job is to make things work; a rock star's job is to grab attention.

The Gateses started the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) in 2000, merging the Will H. Gates Foundation and the Gates Learning Foundation. In developing countries, it focused on improving people's health and giving them a chance to raise themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the U.S., it sought to ensure all people could succeed in school and in life.

Bono's Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa (DATA) was started in part by an endowment from BMGF. (In 2007, DATA merged with Bono's ONE Campaign, taking the name ONE.) DATA, which was cited in the cover story, sought debt relief programs for Africa, trade policy adjustments, and the elimination of the AIDS epidemic there.

Generosity was redefined in 2005. Americans gave more money to Indonesian tsunami relief, more than $1.6 billion, than to any overseas mission ever before. Four Category 5 hurricanes brought another outpouring of cash, some $2.7 billion. The public failure of the U.S. government to manage Hurricane Katrina's aftermath became the political story of 2005. But the private response of individuals, from every lemonade stand to every mitten drive, was the human story of the year.

In 2010, billionaire philanthropist Warren Buffett and the Gateses started the Giving Pledge, recruiting 40 of America's wealthiest people to the cause. The concept is simple, according to the website: It's "an open invitation for billionaires, or those who would be if not for their giving, to publicly commit to give the majority of their wealth to philanthropy either during their lifetimes or in their wills. It is inspired by the example set by millions of people at all income levels who give generously—and often at great personal sacrifice—to make the world better."

Facebook founder and billionaire Mark Zuckerberg joined the Giving Pledge early on. "People wait until late in their career to give back. But why wait when there is so much to be done?" Zuckerberg said in a statement. "With a generation of younger folks who have thrived on the success of their companies, there is a big opportunity for many of us to give back earlier in our lifetime and see the impact of our philanthropic efforts." Other early signatories were media mogul Ted Turner, businessman David Rockefeller, financiers Michael Bloomberg and Duncan MacMillan, hotelier Barron Hilton, and fashion designer Diane von Furstenberg. As of April 2024, there are 242 pledgers from 29 countries, aged 30 to 90.

In January 2018, Bill Gates became the first guest editor for an issue of TIME, which was themed "The Optimists." In it, Gates explained his motivation:

> *"Reading the news today does not exactly leave you feeling optimistic. Hurricanes in the Americas. Horrific mass shootings. Global tensions over nuclear arms, crisis in Myanmar, bloody civil wars in Syria and Yemen. Your heart breaks for every person who is touched by these tragedies. Even for those of us lucky enough not to be directly affected, it may feel like the world is falling apart.*
>
> *But these events—as awful as they are—have happened in the context of a bigger, positive trend. On the whole, the world is getting better.*
>
> *This is not some naively optimistic view; it's backed by data. Look at the number of children who die before their fifth birthday. Since 1990, that figure has been cut in half. That means 122 million children have been saved in a quarter-century, and countless families have been spared the heartbreak of losing a child.*
>
> *And that's just one measure. In 1990, more than a third of the global population lived in extreme poverty; today only about a tenth do. A century ago, it was legal to be gay in about 20 countries; today it's legal in over 100 countries. Women are gaining political power and now make up more than a fifth of members of national parliaments—and the world is finally starting to listen*

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when women speak up about sexual assault. More than 90% of all children in the world attend primary school. In the U.S., you are far less likely to die on the job or in a car than your grandparents were. And so on.

I'm not trying to downplay the work that remains. Being an optimist doesn't mean you ignore tragedy and injustice. It means you're inspired to look for people making progress on those fronts, and to help spread that progress more widely. If you're shocked by the idea of millions of children dying, you ask: Who is good at saving kids, and how can we help them do more? (This is essentially why Melinda and I started our foundation.)"

In 2019, Melinda French Gates pledged to donate $1 billion over 10 years to promote gender equality. "Here's what keeps me up at night: I imagine waking up one morning to find that the country has moved on," she wrote for TIME. "That the media has stopped reporting on systemic inequalities. That diversity remains something companies talk about instead of prioritizing. That all of this energy and attention has amounted to a temporary swell instead of a sea change. There is too much at stake to allow that to happen. Too many people—women and men—have worked too hard to get us this far. And there are too many possible solutions we haven't tried yet."

The BMGF endowment is the second largest in the world, with assets of over $50 billion. The Gateses divorced in 2021 after 27 years of marriage; in May 2024, Melinda announced she was stepping down as co-chair but pledged to continue her work for women and families.

The foundation gave over $2 billion in aid during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, including $125 million to help end the acute phase and prepare for future pandemics in 2022. "Our ability to avoid pandemics years down the road depends on the actions we take now," said Bill in the press release. "The world can't wait until a new virus emerges. We need to start preparing immediately. And we need to do so with a focus on the people most at risk and the countries most often left behind." Melinda added, "The world was not ready for this pandemic, but we know how to prevent the next one. "Every sector has a role to play in achieving global health security, and the foundation is calling on countries and other funders to make the investments needed to create a safer, more equitable world."

Today, Bono's ONE organization consists of two nonpartisan nonprofits: The ONE Campaign, which educates the public and raises awareness of the crisis of extreme poverty around the globe and the progress being made against it, and ONE Action, which presses lawmakers to support smart, effective policies and programs that are saving lives, educating children, and helping those living in the world's poorest countries.

Page 77, Top: *U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, Bono, managing board member Rick Samans, Bill Gates, and former president of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo at the 2022 World Economic Forum in New York.* ***Page 77, Bottom:*** *Bill and Melinda French Gates at a 1998 press conference announcing their $100 million donation to start the Bill & Melinda French Gates Children's Vaccine Program.* ***Left:*** *Bono flashes the peace sign at the 2014 launch of the ONE Campaign in Philadelphia.* ***Above:*** *Floods in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.*

MEANWHILE IN 2005...

February The video sharing website YouTube is founded. **April** Pope John Paul II dies. Pope Benedict XVI is elected as his successor. **August** Hurricane Katrina strikes the U.S. Gulf Coast, killing over 1,300 people and causing over $100 billion in damage.

2003 *IN IRAQ AND BEYOND*

The American Soldier

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A TYPICAL PLATOON. Every one has a story to tell about the costs of war and the price of peace, and what you learn getting from one to the next. But in contrast to most armed forces in the rest of the world, American pilots, sailors, and soldiers are volunteers. In 2003, U.S. troops were serving in 146 countries, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

In March 2003, U.S.-led forces initiated the first stage of the Iraq War in an attempt, they claimed, to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people. The United Nations and NATO were divided as to whether it was just; so was the U.S. government—the State Department, the Pentagon, and the CIA grappled in a three-way tug-of-war.

It is a romantic notion to think that thousands of young men and women soldiers could descend on a volatile place like Iraq and make it better immediately. As TIME observed, "Liberty can't be fired like a bullet into the hard ground. It requires, among other things, time and trust, and a nation scarred by tyranny and divided by tribe and faith is not going to turn into Athens overnight." U.S. troops were officially withdrawn from Iraq in 2011.

The Middle East did not turn into Athens overnight. In June 2014, President Barack Obama announced that the U.S. would deploy up to 300 special forces to Iraq in response to ongoing chaos in the country. The Green Berets were not returning to combat; instead, the forces were focused on training and helping foster diplomatic solutions to the Iraqi people's conflicts with militant groups. "We will help Iraqis as they take the fight to terrorists who threaten the Iraqi people, the region and American interests as well," Obama said at the press conference. "American combat troops are not going to be fighting in Iraq again," he added. "We do not have the ability to simply solve this problem by sending in tens of thousands of troops."

TIME reported that between 2014 and 2016, the number of troops headed back to Iraq creeped up steadily. Nearly two years later, in April 2016, Pentagon officials said the total U.S. troop presence in Iraq would grow by more than 200 troops—to a deployed force of 4,087—as Baghdad and Washington prepared to take Mosul back from ISIS. Troops on temporary assignment in Iraq, those guarding diplomatic outposts—or those rotating in to replace troops who hadn't left yet—were not included in that number. When they were, Pentagon officials confirmed the total U.S. troops presence in Iraq was close to 5,000.

Since the U.S. was not committed to putting thousands more boots on the ground, they fought ISIS from the air instead, including shooting down drones carrying makeshift bombs. The nine-month Battle of Mosul from October 2016 to July 2017, which U.S. Major General Rupert Jones called "the toughest urban combat that has probably been fought since the Second World War," was a pricey one. In fiscal 2017, the U.S. had $11 billion set aside for its fight against ISIS.

Since then, there has been a drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq, but conflict in the Middle East continues. As of June 2023, the U.S. still had 30,000 troops in the region. Dana Stroul, then deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Middle East, said that one of the biggest concerns was Iran's efforts to obtain a nuclear weapon. That's something she said the U.S. does not want to happen: "President Biden has been quite clear that on his watch Iran will never acquire a nuclear weapon, and he means it," she said, adding that the course of action was diplomatic, but using force was not out of the question.

Right: *U.S. National Guardsmen from a reserve unit in Florida receive Combat Infantryman Badges in Baghdad, Iraq, in 2003.*

MEANWHILE IN 2003...

February Space Shuttle *Columbia* disintegrates upon reentry, killing all seven crew members. **March** The Federal Trade Commission opens the National Do Not Call Registry. **May** Pixar's film *Finding Nemo* is released and later nominated for four Academy Awards and wins the Oscar for Best Animated Feature.

2002 *RIGHTERS OF WRONGS*

The Whistleblowers

IN 2002, THREE ORDINARY WOMEN PUT THEIR careers and livelihoods on the line and bravely exposed dark truths. For this, they were recognized as TIME's Persons of the Year. None of them wanted to be in the media spotlight; their first on-the-record media interview was for TIME's December 30, 2002, Person of the Year cover article.

In the summer of 2001, Sherron Watkins was a VP at Enron Corp. when she wrote a letter to chairman Kenneth Lay warning him that the company's accounting methods were improper. In January 2002, a congressional subcommittee investigating Enron's collapse released the letter and put Watkins in the headlines.

Coleen Rowley was a Minneapolis-based FBI agent who wrote a memo to FBI Director Robert Mueller shortly after 9/11, accusing the bureau of brushing off her pleas that Zacarias Moussaoui, a 9/11 conspirator, be investigated. She later gave testimony about the FBI's mishandling of information related to the attacks.

Cynthia Cooper was an accountant and VP at WorldCom. In 2002, she and her team of internal auditors worked in secret to investigate phony bookkeeping that uncovered $3.8 billion in fraud. At the time, it was the largest incident of corporate fraud in U.S. history.

TIME noted, "These women were for the 12 months just ending what New York City firefighters were in 2001: heroes at the scene, anointed by circumstance. They were people who did right just by doing their jobs rightly."

Enron, once the nation's seventh-largest company, imploded in the early 2000s. Investigations into its accounting practices revealed that the company, along with the prestigious accounting firm Arthur Anderson, was creating special purpose entities to hide their debts and losses, and their stock plummeted. Enron filed for bankruptcy in December 2001. At the time, it was the U.S.'s largest corporate bankruptcy in history.

Sherron Watkins, who sent then CEO Kenneth Lay the email detailing her accounting concerns months before the bankruptcy, testified before Congress in early 2002. As a result of the investigations, Enron CEOs Lay and Jeffrey Skilling and CFO Andrew Fastow were convicted on a variety of conspiracy and fraud charges. Skilling served 12 years, Fastow six, and Lay passed away before he could begin his 45-year term. Lou Pai, another Enron exec, settled a civil suit in 2008 for $31.5 million. Arthur Anderson was also found guilty of shredding evidence as an attempt to hide financial dealings. By the time the Arthur Anderson ruling was overturned in 2005, the accounting firm only had about 200 employees who were managing all the company's legal issues. Enron's collapse sent ripples through the financial system, and the government introduced a new set of stringent regulations for auditors, accountants, and senior executives; more requirements for record keeping; and criminal penalties for securities laws violations.

Coleen Rowley's testimony led to an FBI reorganization and the creation of the Office of Intelligence.

In late 2003, Rowley wrote another letter to FBI director Mueller. In it, she urged him to share her concerns about the impending U.S. invasion of Iraq with President Bush. In it, she wrote, "…it seems clear to me now that the decision to attack Iraq was taken some time ago and you, even as FBI Director, may be little more than a helpless bystander. The bottom line is this: We should be deluding neither ourselves nor the American people that there is any way the FBI, despite the various improvements you are implementing, will be able to stem the flood of terrorism that will likely head our way in the wake of an attack on Iraq. What troubles me most is that I have no assurance that you have made that clear to the president. If you believe my concerns have merit, I would ask you to share them with the president and attorney general. We no doubt can agree that our Government has a gargantuan task facing it of melding American foreign policy to make the world, and primarily United States soil, a safer place. I pray for our American and allied world leaders' success in achieving this most important objective."

In 2004, Rowley resigned from the FBI after 24 years.

In 2005, Cynthia Cooper's diligent work uncovering the WorldCom accounting scandal led to the conviction of "telecom cowboy" CEO Bernard Ebbers on one count of conspiracy, one count of securities fraud, and seven counts of false regulatory filings. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison, but he was released in December 2019 due to deteriorating health. He died in February 2020.

Above: *Sherron Watkins is sworn in to give her testimony to the House subcommittee regarding Enron's collapse.*

MEANWHILE IN 2002...

February Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, dies at Royal Lodge, Windsor. **October** Former President Jimmy Carter is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. **November** The Department of Homeland Security is established.

1975 *CHANGE-MAKERS*

American Women

THE PERSON OF THE YEAR FOR 1975 SYMBOLIZED the ascending power and status of women in many realms, acknowledging the average woman's pursuit of equality at home, at the office, and in society. "Enough U.S. women have so deliberately taken possession of their lives," the cover story read, "that the event is spiritually equivalent to the discovery of a new continent."

TIME gave the following 12 women the spotlight:
Susan Brownmiller, author of *Against Our Will*
Kathleen Byerly, first female captain in the U.S. Navy
Alison Cheek, first female Episcopalian minister
Jill Conway, first female president of Smith College
Ella Grasso, first female governor of Connecticut
Betty Ford, politically active as First Lady of the U.S.
Carla Hills, first female U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
Barbara Jordan, of the U.S. House of Representatives
Billie Jean King, tennis player and winner of the "Battle of the Sexes II"
Carol Sutton, first female managing editor of a major American newspaper, the *Louisville Courier Journal*
Susie Sharp, Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court
Addie Wyatt, vice president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters trade union

It took almost 25 years for TIME to catch up with itself. It was not until 1999 that TIME replaced "Man of the Year" with the gender-neutral term "Person of the Year," although there were women chosen before 1975: Wallis Simpson in 1936, China's Soong Mei-ling in 1937 (co-named with her husband), Queen Elizabeth II in 1952, and Corazon Aquino in 1986. Prior to 1969 when TIME named "The Inheritor" the "Man and Woman of the Year," a few groups that were comprised of women and men were named "Man of the Year."

After 1999, one group of women, "The Whistleblowers," was named in 2002, philanthropist Melinda French Gates was named jointly with Bill Gates and Bono in 2005, German chancellor Angela Merkel was named in 2015, "The Silence Breakers" of the #MeToo movement were named in 2017, environmentalist Greta Thunberg in 2019, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris was named with President-elect Joe Biden in 2020, and Taylor Swift was named in 2023.

In 2020, TIME released its "100 Women of the Year" list, which included all 11 women who had previously been named Person of the Year and 89 others who were deserving of the distinction. The months-long selection process was an exercise in looking at ways in which women held power due to systemic inequality. "Women," former TIME editor in chief Nancy Gibbs wrote, "were wielding soft power long before the concept was defined."

The project raised such questions as: "What does it mean to be a woman?" and "How has society failed to acknowledge the contributions of women?" Writer and feminist organizer Gloria Steinem, who was chosen for the year 1970 on the "100 Women of the Year" list, had written a piece for TIME in 1970 and was asked to revisit it in 2020. With the gift of hindsight, she wrote:

"'Women's issues' are no longer in a silo but are understood as fundamental to everything. For instance, the single biggest determinant of whether a country is violent, or will use military violence against another country, is not poverty, natural resources, religion, or even degree of democracy; it is violence against women. And since racial separation can't be perpetuated in the long run without controlling reproduction—and thus women's bodies—racism and sexism are intertwined and can only be uprooted together. A belief in equality, without division by sex or race, is now held by a huge majority in public-opinion polls. But a stubborn minority of Americans feel deprived of the unearned privilege of that old hierarchy and are in revolt. The time of greatest danger comes after a victory, and that's where we are now."

For many women who took part in that movement in the 1970s, and for others, Steinem's words would likely have seemed prescient two years later when the Supreme Court reversed *Roe v. Wade*.

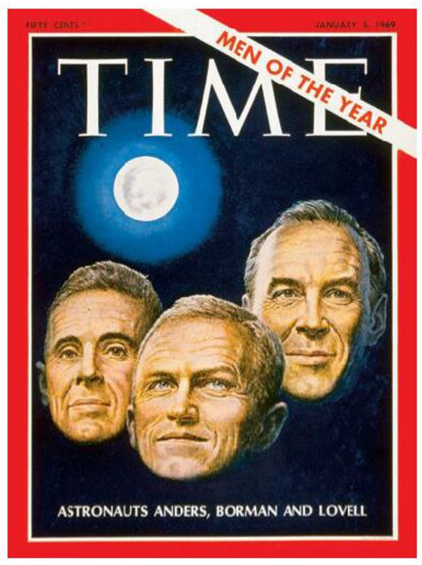
Right: *Billie Jean King celebrates after beating Bobby Riggs in the "Battle of the Sexes II" tennis exhibition in 1973.*

MEANWHILE IN 1975...

February Margaret Thatcher becomes the first female leader of the British Conservative Party. **June** Steven Spielberg's blockbuster film *Jaws* is released. **September** Newspaper heiress Patty Hearst is arrested for armed robbery in San Francisco.

MEANWHILE IN 1968...

May President Johnson signs the Truth in Lending Act to promote the informed use of consumer credit. **July** Gordon Moore and Robert Noyce found Intel Corp. in Santa Clara, California. **November** The Beatles release *The Beatles*, also known as the White Album.



1968 *SPACE PIONEERS*

The Apollo 8 Astronauts

THREE MEN, COLONEL FRANK BORMAN, CAPTAIN James Lovell Jr., and Major William Anders, were named Person of the Year in 1968. In a historic 147-hour flight, the trio of astronauts became the first humans to orbit the moon. It was a national triumph when America needed it most, as 1968 was a tough year: The Vietnam War dragged on, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated, students protested against the "Establishment," and President Lyndon B. Johnson's popularity was at a low point.

TIME also credited the 20,000 contractors and 300,000 engineers, technicians, and workers who propelled the country's space effort in the decade prior, as well as earlier astronauts, such as Alan Shepherd and John Glenn, who bravely journeyed in primitive crafts in the earlier years of the Space Race. Gus Grissom, Edward White II, and Roger Chaffee, the men who sacrificed their lives on the failed *Apollo 1* mission, were also recognized, as were President Kennedy and President Johnson for their support of the program.

Although the moon orbit was a precursor to the historic *Apollo 11* moon landing in 1969, Thomas Paine, then acting administrator of NASA, took advantage of the *Apollo 8* success to remind the U.S. that a manned lunar landing was not the ultimate space goal. "This is not the end but the beginning," he said. "We are at the onset of a program of space flights that will extend through many generations. We're looking forward to the days when we will be manning space stations in the sky, conducting lunar exploration and, in the distant future, blazing a new trail out to the planets."

Many students and intellectuals, protesting against the "power structure" and the "Establishment," were loud in their condemnation of America's commitment to space. It was ridiculed by such authorities as *Science* editor Philip Abelson as a "moondoggle," by a congressional critic as a "garish spectacle." Indeed, considering the proliferation of terrestrial problems—poverty, ignorance, racism, the decay of the cities, the destruction of the environment, the deepening chasm between affluent and developing nations—it was easy to question the wisdom of spending billions to escape the troubled planet.

But that, as TIME said in the cover story, "is to miss the essential point. Though the space program has in fact returned the nation untold dividends in technological advancement—and jobs—that is not its rationale or its ultimate justification. Man is propelled from earth to moon by the same instincts that led him from cave to college: the lonely search for knowledge, the fascination of attacking the impregnable, the creative impulse, shared with Tennyson's Ulysses, 'to seek a newer world … to sail beyond the sunset, and the baths of all the western stars.' The newer world opened up by these brave astronauts will surely, in time, reach far beyond the moon, but its radiance cannot fail to illumine life on planet Earth."

All of that was true: The Apollo program, which wrapped up with *Apollo 17* in 1972, culminated with 12 people walking on the moon and troves of scientific data. But over half a century later, we have gained some perspective of the geopolitical motives behind the Apollo program. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the *Apollo 8* mission in 2018, Borman and Lovell (both 90), and Anders (still the "rookie" at 85) spoke with TIME editor-at-large Jeffrey Kluger. "[Our flight was] going to be an Earth-orbital test of the lunar module," Lovell said. "Instead, we heard that the Russians were going to put a man or men around the moon by the end of 1968." After *Apollo 11* became the first human moon landing, public interest in space cooled and the government began to prioritize funding for different initiatives. The U.S. proved that it could beat the Soviet Union. The country needed to focus on terrestrial issues, not least the war in Vietnam. Subsequent administrations changed space goals repeatedly over the following decades, but the U.S. hasn't set foot on the moon since 1972.

"My main concern in this whole flight was to get there ahead of the Russians and get home. That was a significant achievement in my eyes," *Apollo 8* mission commander Borman explained at a 2017 appearance in Chicago.

Anders is 90, Borman died in 2023 at age 95, and Lovell, 96, is the world's oldest living former astronaut.

Left: *James Lovell Jr., William Anders, and Frank Borman pose in their space suits in 1968.*

1960 *EXPLORERS OF THE FUTURE*

U.S. Scientists

IN JANUARY 1961, TIME NAMED 15 U.S. SCIENTISTS as Person of the Year, because "the heart of scientific inquiry now beats strongest in this country. They are representative of all science—with its dependence on the past, its strivings and frustrations in the present, and its plans, hopes and, perhaps, fantasies for the future."

These are the scientists:

George Beadle, pioneer of genetics
Charles "Doc" Draper, inventor of spacecraft inertial navigation systems
John Enders, pioneer of polio and measles vaccines
Donald A. Glaser, inventor of the bubble chamber
Joshua Lederberg, discoverer of bacterial conjugation
Willard Libby, contributor to radiocarbon dating
Linus Pauling, pioneer of quantum chemistry and molecular biology
Edward Purcell, co-discoverer of nuclear magnetic resonance
Isidor Rabi, co-discoverer of nuclear magnetic resonance
Emilio Segrè, discoverer of astatine, technetium, and the antiproton
William Shockley, co-inventor of the transistor
Edward Teller, nuclear physicist and co-inventor of the hydrogen bomb
Charles Townes, inventor of the maser
James Van Allen, discoverer of the Van Allen radiation belt
Robert Woodward, pioneer of organic synthesis

Beadle, a geneticist, shared half of the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine with fellow researcher Edward Tatum in 1958 "for their discovery that genes act by regulating definite chemical events." His work helped found the field of biomedical genetics.

Draper's guidance system work for spacecraft contributed to the Apollo space program that put the first person on the moon in 1969.

Enders shared the 1954 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine with Thomas Huckle Weller and Frederick Chapman Robbins "for their discovery of the ability of poliomyelitis viruses to grow in cultures of various types of tissue." Jonas Salk applied their technique to develop the polio vaccine. Enders also worked to develop a measles vaccine.

Glaser was the recipient of the 1960 Nobel Prize in physics for inventing the bubble chamber that was used for photographing atomic particles. He also worked in molecular biology and neurobiology.

Lederberg, a molecular biologist, received one-third of the 1958 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for discovering that bacteria can mate and exchange genes. He also did significant early research on artificial intelligence and was a consultant on the NASA missions to Mars.

Libby, the recipient of the 1960 Nobel Prize in chemistry, helped revolutionize the fields of archaeology and paleontology. He later was a member of the California Air Resources board, which worked to reduce air pollution.

Pauling is the only person to have won two unshared Nobel Prizes: for chemistry in 1954 and the the Peace Prize in 1962 for his work on banning the testing of nuclear weapons.

Purcell shared the 1952 Nobel Prize in physics with Felix Bloch. Their discovery, nuclear magnetic resonance in liquids and solids, is widely used in biochemical studies.

Rabi was awarded his Nobel Prize in physics in 1944 for discovering the atomic and molecular beam magnetic resonance method of observing atomic spectra. Applications for his work include the MRI, the atomic clock, microwave ovens, masers, and lasers.

Segrè and Owen Chamberlain received the Nobel Prize in physics in 1959 for discovering the antiproton. Segrè also discovered the first man-made element, technetium, and contributed to the discovery of astatine and isotope plutonium-239, which was used in the first atomic bomb.

Shockley, along with colleagues at Bell Labs, John Bardeen and Walter Brattain, discovered the "transistor effect" for semiconductors, which paved the way for the boom in Silicon Valley. The trio received the 1956 Nobel

Prize in physics, but Shockley went on to be known as a racist and eugenicist.

Teller was known as "the father of the H-bomb," although many of his colleagues considered him a coparent. He contributed to the Cold-War nuclear arms race, worked to find peaceful uses for atomic explosives, and was a key player on Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.

For his work on masers, Townes received half of the 1964 Nobel Prize in physics; Russians Nicolay Basov and Aleksandr Prokhorov split the other half. Masers are used in atomic clocks, radio telescopes, and deep-space communication ground stations. Townes was also an adviser to the U.S. government, worked on NASA's Apollo program, and started the radio and infrared astronomy program at University of California at Berkeley.

Van Allen's carefully compiled experiments with rockets and satellites added up to an interplanetary detective story. Clue piled upon clue finally demonstrated the existence of the deadly Van Allen belts of radiation that girdle the earth, which are a hazard to space travelers, human and machine.

Woodward was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1965 "for his outstanding achievements in the art of organic synthesis." He synthesized chlorophyll, strychnine, cholesterol, lysergic acid, reserpine and many others. In the early '60s, Woodward started to synthesize vitamin B-12—the most complex natural product to be synthesized to date. The work was published in 1973.

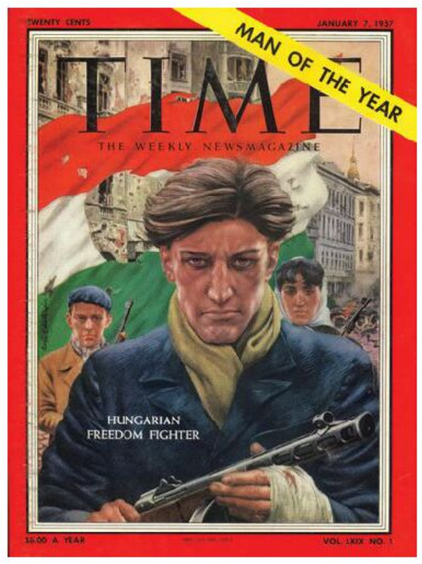
Above: American atomic physicist Edward Teller poses in a lab in 1960.

MEANWHILE IN 1960...

May The 1960 Civil Rights Act goes into law; it dealt primarily with voter disenfranchisement. **July** Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* is published. **November** John F. Kennedy wins the presidential election.

MEANWHILE IN 1956...

January Elvis Presley's first hit, "Heartbreak Hotel," is released. **July** Egypt nationalizes the Suez Canal, which leads to the standoff known as the Suez Crisis. **October** The epic film *The 10 Commandments,* directed by Cecil B. DeMille, premieres.



1956 *FACES OF HOPE*

The Hungarian Freedom Fighter

ON OCTOBER 23, 1956, A CROWD OF ABOUT 20,000 protesters, led by a group of students and intellectuals, gathered beside a statue of the Hungarian national hero General Józef Bem to demand independence from Soviet occupation and freedom for the Hungarian people. It was a romantic idea, indeed—the Hungarians were up against Goliath-like Soviet power, but they fought. A 12-day uprising followed, and thousands were killed before the Soviets succeeded in squelching the attempt.

The Hungarian uprising was not successful or well organized, but it was significant. It marked a point when the common people, long oppressed by the Russian police state, united and fought back. The street and rooftop combatants battled with valor, pride, and pageantry knowing the odds were against them. Even though the standoff only lasted 12 days, the revolutionaries stood up to their enemy, exposed evils to the eyes of the world, and gave hope that someday Eastern Europe would be free from Soviet tyranny.

Hungary would eventually see communism weakened, but it took years. Shortly after the revolution, a puppet government headed by Janos Kadar set about "normalizing" the country through executions, show trials, and brutal repression. The purge made Kadar the most hated man in Hungary and won him the epithet the "Butcher of Budapest."

Three decades later, TIME reported in 1986, the scene in Budapest could not be more different. The streets once strewn with bodies were jammed with eager shoppers and gaudily garbed Western tourists. Natives and visitors alike strolled the elegant pedestrian mall on Vaci Street, past boutiques stuffed with designer fashions and electronics stores filled with imported stereos and home computers. Relaxing in glossy Vorosmarty Square, they enjoyed coffee and pastries at the elegant Gerbaud's cafe. For dinner, they stopped at well-appointed restaurants offering rich meals of pork and beef spiced with paprika, groaning dessert carts, and good Hungarian wines. By comparison with the rest of Eastern Europe, the lifestyle in Hungary was quite fine.

Over the years, a unique bargain was struck between Hungarians and their leaders. In return for conceding Soviet domination of their country, Hungary was granted special license to dabble in free markets and private initiative. Dubbed "goulash Communism," Hungary's balancing act between socialism and capitalism was Kadar's legacy to his country. In that 30 years, his public image came full circle.

But Kadar, who was 74 in 1986, was starting to show signs of poor health and the Hungarian economy was in even worse shape. The global recession of the 1980s hit Hungary hard: Private and state-run companies were ringing up huge losses, and traditional export markets were shrinking. Said one Hungarian journalist, "The mood is more unsettled and apprehensive in this country than at any time since 1956." When Kadar died in 1989, the Soviet Union was also in decline, and the younger generation of Hungarian reformists saw liberalism as the solution to their social and economic woes.

Hungary's transition to capitalism was peaceful. Free elections were held in 1990, and Hungary finally got its democratic leader. But the lack of state subsidies and the speed of privatization led to an economic recession, and leadership flip-flopped in each subsequent election. But Hungary did join NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004. In 2010, Viktor Orban, from the right-wing national conservative Fidesz party was elected and the party gained a Parliamentary supermajority. During Orban's tenure, he and his party adopted a new constitution, criticized the EU, tightened relations with Russia and China, and have been accused of running a non-democracy under the guise of one, including the rigging of elections.

In 2018, the European Parliament suspended some of Hungary's member rights. In 2022, it declared that Hungary is an "electoral autocracy," and can no longer be considered a democracy. Hungary has kept its ties to Russia after the EU, the U.S., and other Western countries imposed sanctions on Russia after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Left: *Hungarian revolutionaries publicly burn an image of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in 1956.*

1950 *DESTINY'S DRAFTEE*

The American Fighting-Man

IN 1950, THERE WAS NO CLEAR CANDIDATE FOR TIME Person of the Year for the first time. So editors made the Person of the Year a symbol: The American Fighting-Man. "Fighting-man" was not the role the U.S. serviceman involved in the Korean War had sought, either individually or as a nation.

In the words of TIME in the cover story, "The U.S. fighting-man was not civilization's crusader, but destiny's draftee. … Most of the men in U.S. uniform around the world had enlisted voluntarily…few had thought they would fight, and fewer still had foreseen the incredibly dirty and desperate war that waited for them. They hated it, as soldiers in all lands and times have hated wars, but the American had some special reasons for hating it. He was the most comfort-loving creature who had ever walked the earth. … As well as comfort, he loved and expected order; he yearned, like other men, for a predictable world, and the fantastic fog and gamble of war struck him as a terrifying affront."

The issues of freedom, faith, and survival that dragged American soldiers to Korea were intertwined with America's heritage, character, technological feats, and organizational prowess. The U.S. created the 20th century revolution, and the U.S. would fight against communism in Korea to uphold the progress it had made.

On July 27, 1953, an armistice was reached to bring an end to the bloody three-year war fought between a divided Korean peninsula and the pro-democracy and communist forces backing either side. Decades later, no peace treaty has been signed. To this day, tourists who visit the demilitarized zone, or DMZ, that separates North and South Korea bear witness to the last frozen battlefield of the Cold War, a conflict that defines and shapes the societies living on either side of the 38th parallel.

South Korea has emerged as an economic powerhouse, a global trendsetter whose companies and pop stars are celebrated across continents and whose people are perhaps the world's most internet savvy. They even hosted the 2018 Winter Olympics. North Korea, on the other hand, is the least-connected place on earth, a nation built entirely on the propaganda and brutality of its totalitarian, post-Stalinist regime. Even today, South Korean and Western culture, including music, TV, movies, and clothing, is banned. Denim is forbidden. All North Koreans must wear a lapel pin that depicts the image of their leader.

In the seven-plus decades since the 1953 armistice, tensions waxed and waned between North Korea and its foreign backers, sometimes escalating to the point that the world takes note. Since North Korea possesses nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, leaders in South Korea, the U.S., and Japan monitor North Korea's moves very carefully, particularly in light of their current warm relations with Russia.

North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un has moved to strike the idea of peaceful reunification from the country's constitution and has taken down monuments set up by his father and grandfather dedicated to the concept of a unified peninsula. This has stoked concern he may be girding for war—worries heightened by Kim building up his nuclear arsenal and ignoring calls from the U.S. to return to the bargaining table.

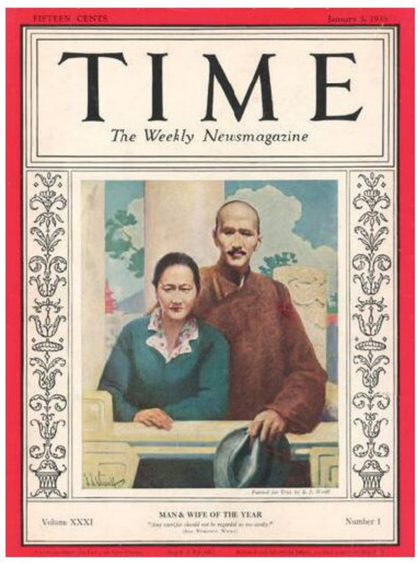
More than 36,000 Americans died in the Korean War, and nearly 7,700 American military servicepeople are still unaccounted for, according to the Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, of which approximately 5,300 are thought to be in North Korean territory. Over the years, when relations warmed, North Korea has slowly returned some of the remains to the U.S. Several hundred have been identified and returned to their families.

Although the TIME article refers to the "American Fighting-Man," over 130,000 women also served in active-duty positions in Korea, according to the USO. Although they could not serve in combat, they worked as nurses, military police, and engineers.

Right: *U.S. troops cross a stream in a march to the front lines in Korea in July 1950.*

MEANWHILE IN 1950...

February Diners Club issues the first credit cards—they were made of cardboard. **March** *All About Eve* receives the Academy Award for Best Picture. **December** The average U.S. family income was $3,300, up $200 from 1949.



1937 *PRESIDENT & FIRST LADY OF CHINA*

Gen. & Mme. Chiang Kai-shek

WHEN TIME NAMED ITS FIRST HUSBAND-AND-wife couple of the year, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and Soong Mei-ling, China was in the early stages of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the largest Asian war in the 20th century. China fought the invading Japanese imperialists with aid from Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In the years leading up to the war, known as the Nanjing Decade, the couple worked to build China's national consciousness, modernize its systems, reform its banking systems, improve its infrastructure, and eliminate corruption and Communism. These efforts caught the eyes of Western leaders. When Chiang was kidnapped in 1936, the couple's efforts to unify fragmented China seemed to have worked: Chinese soldiers and officials from around the country rallied for Chiang's release. In other words, he was seen as their leader.

As first lady, Soong Mei-ling was influential in her own right as she worked alongside her husband. "No woman in the West holds so great a position as Mme. Chiang Kai-shek holds in China," said TIME in 1937.

The Second Sino-Japanese War finally ended when the Japanese surrendered in 1945. China was recognized as one of the Big Four Allies during World War II, regained all territories lost to Japan, and became one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

Chiang saw little distinction between his own fate and that of the giant, sprawling, poverty-stricken land that he ruled for just over 20 years. All his life, the lean and ambitious soldier fought bravely, though in the end vainly, to shape history to his personal specifications. When he died of a heart attack in 1975 at the age of 87 in his exile capital of Taipei, he was still clinging to the sacred fiction that it was he and nobody else who was the legitimate father of all of modern China. His death could hardly have been more dramatically timed. To Chiang, the rout of anti-Communist forces in Indochina must have seemed the inevitable continuation of the long and losing Asian struggle against Communism, in which he was the principal casualty.

Chiang was one of the century's major figures. As a revolutionary and ardent nationalist, he had an epic career embracing both triumph and tragedy. Sixty years of his life were consumed by bitter uphill struggles: first against the crumbling Manchu dynasty, then against the warlords who flourished in its ruins, next against invaders from imperial Japan, and finally against the Communist peasant army that foreclosed his dream of dominance in China and chased him to an unhappy exile in Taiwan.

Paradoxically, the generalissimo cast a longer shadow on the century than on China itself. At the peak of his international prestige, he was a smiling, greatcoated member of the wartime Big Four. It was in America that his image was most exalted. But when he failed to live up to his image as China's man of destiny and the new Asia so ardently expected by Americans failed to materialize, Chiang found himself abandoned and in the center of the hate-filled witch hunt for those who "lost China."

In fact, China was never really "lost"—it had never been won. The U.S. tended to see Chiang's China as a unified nation with an effective central government, even idealizing it as a breeding ground for an American-style democracy. But it was none of these. Chiang tried to set foundations of a modern and united country. But during Chiang's entire tenure as China's leader, the country remained beset by outside aggression, deep internal divisions, corruption, and inefficiency in Chiang's ruling party and, not least, his intractable insistence on shortsighted, ineffective policies.

Chiang never completely freed himself from the militarists and the feudal landlords who stood in the way of fundamental reforms. The Communists, on the other hand, swept the past away. But their accomplishment came only at incalculable social and personal cost, and even they, after 75 years of rule, have not solved all the stability and cohesion problems that have historically plagued the country.

In reunifying China after more than a decade of debilitating fragmentation, Chiang performed a critical service for the nation, one that paved the way for greater centralization under the Communists. But in the final analysis, given the scope of his problems, it is not surprising that he was unable to construct a durable political system. "In great things," Erasmus once wrote, "it is enough to have tried." Chiang's try was on a grand scale. His failure in the end diminishes but should not obscure his historical importance.

Soong Mei-ling was featured on three TIME covers, in 1931, on the 1937 Person of the Year issue, and again in 1943. After her husband's death in 1975, she moved to the U.S. and lived outside the spotlight. She died in New York City in 2023 at age 105.

Above: *Gen. and Mme. Chiang Kai-shek with members of the press in Nanking in 1937.*

MEANWHILE IN 1937...

May The *Hindenburg* bursts into flames at Lakehurst Maxfield Field in New Jersey. **June** Pilot Amelia Earhart and crew member Fred Noonan disappear while flying over the Pacific Ocean. **September** J.R.R. Tolkien's first novel, *The Hobbit*, is published.

TIME

BEST OF
Person
of the
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